

# THE AMERICAN Legion

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*The magazine for a strong America*

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*The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.4 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 14,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.*

### A STAND AGAINST TERROR

Family members, friends, Legionnaires and other visitors leave thousands of mementos at the crash site of United Flight 93 near Shanksville, Pa. Thirty-three passengers and seven crew members died when terrorists hijacked the plane on Sept. 11, 2001. *James V. Carroll*

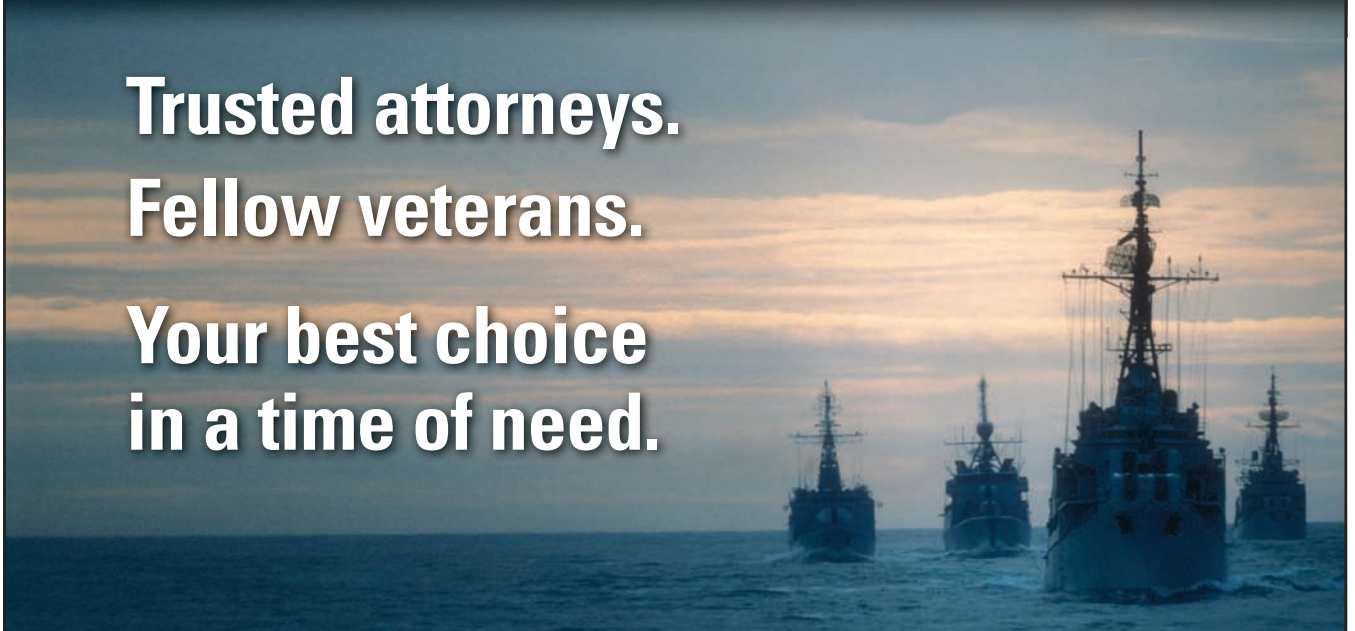


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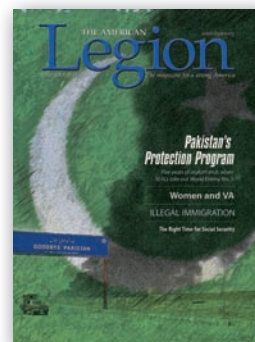
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## 'Beyond the Point of No Return'

Ben Barber's article (July) is one of the most thorough I've read about why Pakistan acts the way it does toward the United States, despite all the money we pour into that country. His insider's view of the entire region explains the reasons why we continue to tolerate this attitude, even when Pakistan harbors terrorists like the late Osama bin Laden and others. I just wish other media outlets would be as complete in their coverage.

— Harold Lee Streetman, Oklahoma City



My late wife, Dottie, and I were part of the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan in 1969 and 1970, when I was an Air Force brigadier general, and we knew the country and its people reasonably well. Ben Barber's article is truly a masterpiece. He did not miss a thing.

— H.E. Collins, San Antonio

One would think that with bin Laden's assassination, there might now be a possibility that the situation in the Middle East could improve. But after reading this article, I wonder if there is a solution at all. The money we have spent on aid, with more to come, has done nothing to improve our relationship with the country.

As a retired Marine from the Vietnam era, my main concern is the protection of our fighting forces, who over the past decade have given their lives in this country where we are hated so much. I appreciate the educated opinion of Ben Barber about our unstable relationship with this country. It's the truth, as ugly as it is. What a shame.

— Bradley E. Purdom, Edgewater, Fla.

## 'Independence from Illegal Immigration'

I am totally disgusted with Mark Krikorian's article (July). Don't people in this country realize that illegal aliens are, in

fact, criminals? Yet any time anyone has the guts to demand that they be arrested and deported – by force, if needed – they are attacked by every bleeding-heart do-gooder and called a racist.

Do the laws of the United States mean nothing when they pertain to actions taken by the millions of Mexicans crossing the border each year? Are we supposed to keep supporting them and their families?

An attrition policy getting results? Nice try. There are “only” 11 million left in the country. How bad do the economy and job market have to get before they go back to Mexico?

— James Guthrie, North Aurora, Ill.

## Planned Parenthood funding

I was disappointed in July's Big Issues. An article obviously intended as a well-balanced analysis of a complex issue was instead a sloppy piece of biased and misleading information.

Anyone reading the two articles could easily discern that one of the contributors is either lying or deliberately playing fast and loose with facts (which I still call lying). Rep. Diane Black, R-Tenn., writes that “according to a report ... 98 percent of Planned Parenthood's services to pregnant women ... are for abortion.” Rep. Lois

Capps, D-Calif., counters that “97 percent of all services are unrelated to abortion,” and continues that “not a single taxpayer dollar pays for abortion services ... with the exception of procedures necessary to save the life of the woman, or in the case of rape or incest.”

Without having to take sides on abortion, I think you owe it to your readers to provide a factual, in-depth report on Planned Parenthood.

— Wallace Harrison, Virginia Beach, Va.

Rep. Black cites a Chiaroscuro Foundation report, while Rep. Capps references Planned Parenthood’s own numbers. The report may be biased, but the numbers certainly are. Somebody is wrong. Abortion-related percentages are moot – that abortion number should be zero. Defund Planned Parenthood.

— John E. Covell, Pharr, Texas

These are two totally conflicting bits of information, about the same organization, that are confusing voters. No wonder Americans, especially veterans, don’t trust politicians anymore. It would be refreshing to get an occasional straight answer.

— John Janetos, Maynard, Ark.

After reading this piece, I had to write letters to Rep. Black and Rep. Capps. I hope that you, too, will contact them, and either let them debate their factual presentations or apologize for their misrepresentations. One of them is outright lying.

— Walter F. Sosnowski, Dallas

**Editor’s note:** Technically,

*Rep. Black and Rep. Capps do not contradict each other. Capps says that 97 percent of all services – that is, to every single woman who walks through Planned Parenthood’s doors – are unrelated to abortion; this would include health exams, contraceptive services, etc. Black says that 98 percent of services to those women who are already pregnant when they come to Planned Parenthood are for abortions.*

### **Medal of Honor not ‘won’**

I just read an article regarding the presentation of the Medal of Honor to another brave service-member. I disapprove of how some news and magazine articles describe such presentations, whether to a living recipient or to a member of the family, as having “earned” or “won” the medal, or some other inaccurate description. To illustrate my point: would you ask a recipient, “How did you win the medal?” Sounds rather tactless to me.

I am sure their actions were not based on wanting to “win” the Medal of Honor, nor on “earning” it. We need to refer to these brave people as “recipients” who “receive” the medal. I firmly believe that The American Legion should initiate legislation that requires Congress and VA to refer to these presentations appropriately. This change could start with the Legion.

— Paul W. Johnson, Gretna, Neb.

### **‘Malign Neglect’**

Unfortunately, the article by Frank J. Gaffney Jr. (June) is predicated on a 1950s mindset. The face of war has changed.

Consequently, thermonuclear weapons are today as outdated as the cannon.

If Gaffney can explain how such weapons could have prevented 9/11 or of what value they would be in conflicts such as those in Iraq or Afghanistan, I would be greatly enlightened.

The only role of nuclear weapons is to simultaneously prevent and assure mutually assured destruction (MAD, a particularly apt acronym), which would result in a world that fights its wars with sticks and clubs – if anyone survived. In my opinion, the gradual decline, and eventual demise, of our nuclear arsenal is progress toward a more civilized world.

Not only is this decline good because it decreases a massive drain on the economy, but the elimination of the temptation to utterly destroy an enemy (who will undoubtedly respond in kind) is, in the end, even better.

— Allen Dickinson, Santa Ana, Costa Rica

### **More veterans in Washington**

I am a peacetime veteran who served from 1954 to 1956. My service enabled me to have an education, and then a 30-plus-year career in the civil service. During this time, I encountered very few veterans, especially those with more recent military service. I suspect that our country would be better served with more veterans on the civilian side of federal employment, including in central budget and control agencies, as well as in Congress.

— Thomas J. Cuny, Alexandria, Va.

## **THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE WELCOMES YOUR OPINIONS**

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# Our most important call to action

Last November, a woman from Massachusetts faced the possibility of homelessness for the holidays. She had been turned out into the streets while her soldier husband was deployed in Afghanistan. Sue had recently given birth to the couple's second child. The Red Cross learned of her situation and contacted The American Legion.

"We found her a suitable place to live," explained Steven Jimmo, chairman of The American Legion's Family Support Network in Massachusetts. "The local American Legion post worked hard over the next 24 hours to get the necessary amenities. They provided curtains for the apartment, additional food, furniture, and toys for the children. They made sure this young woman with her two infant children – whose father was on duty overseas – had a memorable Thanksgiving."

All across the nation, the Legion makes a difference for military families and newly discharged veterans. We do it through the Family Support Network, Temporary Financial Assistance, Heroes to Hometowns, Operation Comfort Warriors, and hundreds of state and local initiatives. Just like the families, no two situations are alike. Among thousands we have recently helped are:

- *A Delaware reservist, his wife and their six children.* The Legion stepped in when she lost her job, and they had no fuel for their home in the dead of winter.
- *Servicemembers stationed at Fort Dix, N.J.,* who wanted to spend Thanksgiving with their families just before a 12-month deployment but couldn't pay for their travel. The Legion made it happen.
- *A Johnstown, Pa., family struggling to survive,* having lost their home and cars due to scarce job opportunities. The Legion provided financial assistance, food, and guidance about how to attain certification for employable skills the man had honed in the military.
- *An Air Force member in California, with a 5-year-old son,* whose car was broken into; everything was stolen, including her rent money. The Legion got her back on her feet.

Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently said that the best way America can support our troops in transition is at the community level. He might just as well have said "at the American Legion level."

With 14,000 local posts, and more than 2.4 million veterans among our members, no other entity in the nation is better equipped to handle this vital responsibility. I end my year as your national commander with one request: examine your troop-support programs closely, and if they need a jump-start, do it now. If you have a troop-support program that really works but needs more exposure, let people know. Talk to the local media. Share the story of your work on the Legion website and Facebook. That's how families learn about what we do and who we are.

In times like these – when troops come home from war to tough economic times – we are all one community. Nothing is more central to the purpose of the Legion than easing their burdens, and helping secure the futures they fought to protect.




National Commander  
Jimmie Foster

## MEMORANDA

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 [www.legion.org/financialassistance](http://www.legion.org/financialassistance)

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# Lift the embargo against Cuba



## SUPPORT

**Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y.**

■ Rangel is former chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.



## OPPOSE

**Rep. David Rivera, R-Fla.**

■ Rivera is a member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

For too long, our country has adhered to failed and outdated policies toward Cuba that benefit neither the United States nor our island neighbor. We have allowed dictators such as Venezuela's Hugo Chávez to exploit oil discovered on Cuba's shores and weaken our influence in the hemisphere, at a time when our country is faced with a \$14.3 trillion debt and fighting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. With new and emerging threats like biological warfare and devastating natural disasters, we will one day need our Caribbean neighbors – including Cuba – to be partners in creating a more secure world for our children.

With Cuba recently legalizing the sale of real estate and cars, as well as expanding private cooperatives, the United States has a rare opportunity to fundamentally reshape our foreign policy toward the nation. I have introduced three pieces of legislation that would allow the free exchange of people, goods and ideas between our countries. These bills will collectively lift travel restrictions, open trade relations, and increase exports to Cuba.

Opening relations with Cuba would be a major economic boon to the United States by increasing Cuban demand for agricultural and commercial products. The 2009 U.S. International Trade Commission Report found that lifting trade restrictions would increase U.S. exports to Cuba from approximately \$924 billion to \$1.2 trillion. The total economic activity generated in U.S. rice-producing and milling communities based on exports in 2004 alone was nearly \$220 million, helping to create and maintain up to 1,400 U.S. jobs.

Facilitating U.S. exports to Cuba will do more than gain revenue from a new, profitable source. We will be able to transmit American culture, ideals and democracy through this relationship.

For 52 years, Cubans have been held captive on their island nation by a brutal terrorist dictatorship more concerned with self-preservation and power than human rights and civil liberties.

The U.S. embargo against Cuba began in the 1960s, and was codified in the 1990s through the Cuban Democracy and Helms-Burton acts. The purpose of the laws was to mitigate the effects of the Castro regime's "consistent

disregard for internationally accepted standards of human rights and democratic values."

Human-rights atrocities in Cuba have continued ever since the Castro brothers took power in 1959. The regime's leaders consistently resort to violence because they know it is the only way they can hope to maintain control. The dictatorship has held Alan Gross, a U.S. citizen, since December 2009 on charges of subversion, for distributing communications equipment to Jewish groups on the island. In March, he was sentenced to 15 additional years in prison, without access to proper due process. At the same time, Cuban activists like Juan Wilfredo Soto Garcia are beaten to death by regime thugs, and dissident groups like the Ladies in White are harassed for assembling and marching peacefully.

The State Department has designated Cuba a state sponsor of terrorism. Any weakening of the current embargo, without requiring changes from the Castro dictatorship in regards to human rights and open elections, sends a message that the dictatorship does not have to improve before being rewarded by the United States.

Lifting the embargo will not lead to a better quality of life for the Cuban people, or grant them the freedom they so desperately need and want. It only serves to enrich the Cuban dictatorship.

## THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

*Supporters say the United States will reap economic benefits by lifting its Cuba embargo. Critics say such a move would only enrich the Castro dictatorship.*

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## GOODBYE PYRAMID, HELLO PLATE

Picture this: a dinner plate that shows you what a healthy diet looks like. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is hoping its new plate diagram will make it easier for Americans to make healthy food choices. The plate replaces the food pyramid, which was introduced in 1992 and revised in 2005, but was thought to be too confusing.

The new circular food plate features four sections. Half of the plate is filled with fruits and vegetables. A quarter is filled with grains such as rice and cereal. The other quarter contains lean proteins such as chicken and nuts. A smaller circle to the right of the plate represents dairy – think of having a glass of low-fat milk or 8 ounces of low-fat yogurt.

The USDA wants to encourage more Americans to develop a healthy diet, in the hope of helping prevent obesity, heart disease, diabetes and even some cancers. The new plate doesn't include exercise, but the U.S. government strongly recommends that people also get at least 30 minutes, at least five days a week, of physical activity.

Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.



## Local vegetables make inroads

BY JUDITH S. HURLEY

Something's happening down on the farm. Across the country, attendance at farmers markets is hitting record levels, consumers by the thousands are sustaining local farms through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), and school districts are swapping canned green beans from warehouses for fresh produce from down the road.

The number of farmers markets in the United States has tripled, from 1,755 in 1994 to 6,132 in 2010. In Iowa, where the number of markets grew by a more modest 75 percent in roughly the same time period, farmers markets still contributed \$59.4 million and 574 jobs to the state's economy in 2009, according to the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. Urban farmers markets are some of the most successful. In 2010, 700,000 residents of Portland, Ore., visited the city's farmers markets, an attendance increase of 13 percent over the previous year, and tucked nearly \$7 million worth of produce into their baskets, bags and totes.

These markets benefit farmers because they can sell directly to consumers, without a middleman – a particular advantage for small- and medium-sized growers who have difficulty gaining access to large food distributors. The markets also benefit consumers, who can meet the growers of their food, and buy items such as flavorful heirloom varieties of fruits and vegetables that can't be found in any supermarket, fresh greens that were rooted in the ground just a few hours earlier, and a unique selection of cheeses, honeys, herb-flavored oils and other locally produced foods.

People are also connecting with local farms through CSA arrangements. Typically, a household pays a subscription or membership fee to a farm – essentially purchasing an advance share of the farm's production – and gets a weekly box of produce during the growing season. The farmer benefits from the flow of cash early in the season, while members enjoy fresh local food and a relationship with the

See **FARMERS MARKETS** on page 14



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**FARMERS MARKETS** *continued from page 12*

farmer who grows it. Many CSAs offer volunteer opportunities and encourage members to visit the farm to learn how the food is grown.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the number of CSAs has increased from just 60 in 1990 to 3,600 in 2010. Local Harvest, a California-based organization that supports access to locally grown food, estimates that 80 percent of CSAs serve 100 members or fewer, although some serve more than 500 members. In some parts of the country, there are not enough CSA farms to meet the demand.

The USDA is also jumping on the locally-grown bandwagon. It provides low-income seniors, women and children who receive federal food assistance with coupons to purchase produce at participating farmers markets and CSAs. As part of the federal Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, a new USDA rule implemented in April allows schools to give preference to locally grown agricultural products for school-lunch programs. With additional support from the Farm to School and Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiatives, schools are planting vegetable gardens, offering food tastings, and partnering with local farms to provide educational opportunities.

Numerous studies have linked a high fruit-and-vegetable intake to lower risk for certain cancers, eye disease, high blood pressure and heart disease. Harvard researchers followed 110,000 men and women for 14 years, and found that those who averaged 8 or more servings a day were 30 percent less likely to have a heart attack or stroke than those who had fewer than 1.5 servings a day.

USDA Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan says the demand for locally grown food is expected to increase from an estimated \$4 billion in 2002 to \$7 billion in 2012.

With clear benefits for both farmers and consumers, reconnecting with the farm just might be the right thing to do.

*Judith Hurley is a freelance writer specializing in health and medicine.*

**FIND YOUR FARMER**

Locate farmers markets and CSA farms in your community:

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

 [apps.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets](http://apps.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets)

**Local Harvest**

 [www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org)

**Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association**

 [www.biodynamics.com/csa.html](http://www.biodynamics.com/csa.html)

**Your state's farmers market association**

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Add rest breaks, exercise and relaxation time to your daily schedule.

Learn deep-breathing techniques to aid in relaxation.

Set achievable goals, don't overdo activity on good days, and pace yourself.

Engage in positive self-talk ("I feel energetic and strong").

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# Working to live, or living to work?

BY LANCE FRAZER

By most measures, people in the United States work more than people almost anywhere else. Couple that with what Canisius College professor of counseling and human services E. Christine Moll believes is a wrongheaded approach to leisure time, and you've got a prescription for some serious health problems.

In 2004, employed Americans left unused some 415 million days of vacation time. They live with their noses to the grindstone, especially when compared to most of the rest of the world.

"So what?" you might ask. Life produces stresses, and studies link stress to everything from colds and sinus infections to high blood pressure, heart disease, multiple sclerosis, diabetes and some types of cancer. According to a Department of Health and Human Services study from 2000, 70 to 80 percent of all doctor visits are for stress-related or stress-induced illnesses, and job stress costs the United States about \$200 billion annually.

When we do take time off, it's more often for a "long weekend," or single days here or there. But to truly benefit from leisure time, it has to be a complete separation from the work world, Moll says, and last more than a couple of days.

"People take a long weekend, but what they don't appreciate is that, from a psychological and physiological point of view, it takes time to decompress from work," Moll explains. "Additionally, I see people taking a three-day weekend, but still spending their time texting or emailing, and that just won't cut it.

"In Europe, a lot of companies will shut down for a month during the summer, which is a very healthy approach. In the United States, we're more likely to just take a week off now and then. The problem is that it takes the first two days for your mind and body to unwind, then the last two days are spent gearing up again, so you really only have three days." And that week off might only come along once a year, anyway.

So what do you do in the meantime? Find a passion that can take you away from your daily routine, even if it's

only for an hour at a time. Do crossword puzzles, run (alone), paint, take up needlepoint, or work in the garden. The key, Moll believes, is to leave the everyday behind completely. Leisure is a learned skill, just like anything else. "Start out by looking at the things that interest you, and be honest in how you approach the activity," she says.

Focus on having a good time, and not competing. "You're never too old or too young to start," Moll adds. "And remember that kids learn from their parents. Studies have shown that kids who regularly participate in true leisure activities – not the overscheduling of soccer, swimming, ballet, etc. that too often passes for leisure – do better in school and lead better, more fulfilled and rewarding lives. And if you're older, proper use of leisure time can provide more structure and balance for your life, keep you mentally awake and aware, and better able to deal with the issues of aging."

Of course, it's no secret that the U.S. economy is under terrible stress, something that might make the idea of worrying about leisure time seem frivolous. Not so, Moll believes.

"We are in frightful times, (and everywhere) we see budget cuts, colleagues being let go, families getting by on one salary, and we're left to wonder if we might be next. But leisure activities are not frivolous. In these financially scary times, leisure can help our physical, psychological and spiritual health, and provide new meaning to life when a day seems rather gray."

*Lance Frazer is a Northern California-based writer specializing in health and medicine, nature, science and the environment.*





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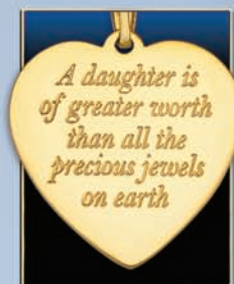
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# Chain-weighted CPI may set COLAs

BY TOM PHILPOTT

Military retirees, disabled veterans, surviving spouses and Social Security recipients have reason to be wary of the call by debt-reduction negotiators – both Republicans and Democrats – to set future federal cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) using a “chain-weighted” consumer price index (CPI).

Many economists say the chain-weighted CPI, which the Bureau of Labor Statistics established in 2002, provides a more accurate measure of inflation for adjusting entitlements. It would also save the government a lot of money – roughly \$300 billion in the first decade.

The bureau’s experience so far with its Chained CPI for All Urban Consumers (C-CPI-U) shows that it dampens annual COLAs by an average of 0.3 percent a year. So if inflation, as measured by the current CPI, averages 3 percent a year, the C-CPI-U would show an average inflation rate of 2.7 percent.

To judge the impact on entitlements, consider a military retiree drawing \$2,000 a month. An annual COLA of 3 percent would raise that to \$2,060 next year, and to \$2,687.83 over a decade. In contrast, annual COLAs of 2.7 percent would raise that retiree’s pay to \$2,054 a month, or \$6 less, next year. In 10 years, annual raises of only 2.7 percent would bring the monthly amount to \$2,610.56. In this case, the C-CPI-U will have dampened monthly payments by \$77.27 over a decade. When the effect is spread over millions, the savings are significant.

Other than to save tax dollars, why use the chain-weighted CPI? Proponents argue that it eliminates a flaw in the current COLA-setting process that exaggerates inflation through something called “substitution bias.”

The index now used to set retiree COLAs is the CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, or CPI-W. It tracks prices for a market basket of goods and services from month to month. Items are weighted based on spending patterns of mostly blue-collar workers. Every two years, BLS conducts a new survey, then readjusts the weightings.

What CPI-W doesn’t do is change the mix of goods and services surveyed to reflect changes in spending behavior by consumers. For example, as the price of oranges goes up, a consumer might buy fewer oranges, but more apples. The CPI-W doesn’t account for that shift.

The chain-weighted CPI will. It is designed to reflect not only price changes, but spending-behavior changes, too, as consumers turn away from more expensive items to buy cheaper alternatives.

Recent debt-reduction studies, including the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform’s report last December, recommend adopting the C-CPI-U to set COLAs for federal programs now adjusted by either CPI-U or CPI-W. The debt-reduction team led by Vice President Joe Biden reportedly reached the same recommendation.

Critics of the chain-weighted CPI argue that it has its

own flaws. One is that the Bureau of Labor Statistics can only gather spending data for such an index months after the fact. So it must estimate expenditures using a “geometric means formula” to produce an interim result. BLS makes two separate adjustments to data, over two years, before the index reading is final. The adjustments are often small, BLS economists say, but some have been large. Other CPI indexes are final when published.

Besides the need for multiple revisions, critics argue, the chain-weighted CPI ignores the fact that the consumer might prefer an orange over an apple, if not for the rising cost. So a chain-weighted index could leave consumers feeling worse off.

Those content with the current cost-of-living index, which measures price changes for a constant market basket of goods and services, might conclude that anything else is “substitution bias” of a different sort.

*Tom Philpott, a former Coast Guardsman, has written about veterans and military personnel issues for more than 30 years.*



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# 9/11

## *How the world has changed since this generation's day of infamy.*

**BY ALAN W. DOWD**

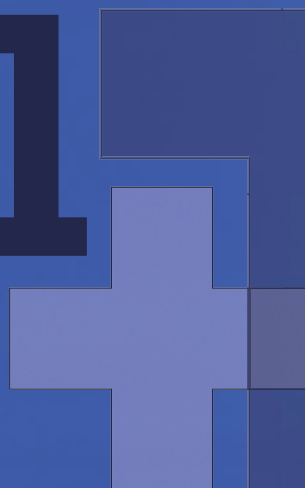
It began as a picture-perfect September day, clear and sunny across much of the eastern United States. Pilots call it “severe clear” – the kind of low-humidity, cloudless conditions that allow aviators to see forever. But in an instant, that perfect day turned into a nightmare. The skies over New York City were streaked with flame and smeared with smoke. One side of the Pentagon was charred black. A patch of Pennsylvania smoldered with the faint traces of battle. And gray ash covered a maimed Manhattan. “Night fell on a different world,” then-President George W. Bush observed.

Osama bin Laden’s global guerrilla war had reached our shores. “We do not differentiate between those dressed in military uniforms and civilians,” he had warned in 1998. “They are all targets.” That became brutally clear on Sept. 11, 2001.

Whatever we call 9/11 – the beginning of a war, the end of America’s invulnerability, an exclamation point to decades of unanswered terror, al-Qaida’s high-water mark, America’s wake-up call – one thing is beyond debate: it changed us, and it changed the world.

Tommy Franks, the general who would command the early phases of U.S. counterstrikes against bin Laden, called Sept. 11 a “crease in history,” a fault line that changed how we piece together the past, live the present and look at the future.

The following are just a few of the ways our world is different 10 years later.



**In the Skies** The terrorists began their day of infamy at the airport. Before 9/11, a typical traveler could arrive at the airport minutes before takeoff, rush through the baggage check, hop on a plane, and wave to his family as he taxied away. After 9/11, travelers had to arrive hours early to navigate a labyrinth of security checks, subjected to full-body searches and an array of active and passive monitors; 8-month-old babies have been patted down, and a 75-year-old congressman has been strip-searched. Once travelers make it through that harrowing, humiliating gantlet, they pass through an armed phalanx of militarized police forces, sometimes bolstered by National Guard units. Fighter jets circle above some airports, just in case. There are strict rules governing where nontravelers can go inside

airports, when it's OK to stand on the plane, and how much shampoo to pack. And still, today every passenger steps on the plane wondering, "What if all that screening didn't work?"

**Manhattan** The enemy forever altered New York's skyline, maiming Manhattan and killing 2,752 people inside the World Trade Center and aboard the planes that felled the Twin Towers.

The enemy's prime target truly was a center for world trade, a fact underscored by the 115 nationalities represented in 9/11's final death toll. Today a memorial, a museum and a new skyscraper are taking shape where the towers once stood. The footprints of the towers form two reflecting pools, with the monument's walls serving as waterfalls. To remind us that the enemy's war against the United States began long before 2001, the memorial includes the names of every person killed both in the attacks on 9/11, and in the previous attack on the World Trade Center on Feb. 26, 1993.

Nearby, a massive skyscraper is edging heavenward; it should be open for business in 2013.

**The Pentagon** The enemy killed 184 people, including a 3-year-old girl, when Flight 77 slammed into our nation's military headquarters.

The Pentagon was a target because, like the World Trade Center, it is a symbol of U.S. power. Within those five walls, Americans have planned

peacekeeping missions for the Balkans and Lebanon; humanitarian efforts to save Berliners, Somalis and Kurds; the defense of Korea, Vietnam and Kuwait; the toppling of Saddam Hussein and the Taliban; and the defeat of German fascism, Japanese militarism, Soviet communism and suicidal jihadism. Yet the U.S. military does more than wage wars. Even as SEAL Team Six finished off bin Laden, other U.S. forces were nurturing a fragile peace in Iraq, rebuilding Afghanistan, providing emergency care in Peru, assisting Japan after the killer earthquake and tsunami, and conducting medical outreach in Malawi. The ship that buried bin Laden – USS *Carl Vinson* – led post-quake relief efforts in Haiti a year earlier.



Hugh Dempsey/Getty

**Shanksville, Pa.** The war on terror actually began on Flight 93, when its 40 passengers and crew mounted a heroic effort to wrest control of the doomed plane. A memorial to their sacrifice is under construction in southwest Pennsylvania. As the 9/11 Commission concluded, the objective of Flight 93's hijackers was to attack "symbols of the American republic: the Capitol or the White House," but they were "defeated by the alerted, unarmed passengers." As Paul Greengrass, director of "United 93," observes, "they were the first people to inhabit the post-9/11 world."

Because of 9/11, America's history is split in two. There is the pre-9/11 era, a decade when war seemed unthinkable. And there is the post-9/11 era, a time of war.

**Washington** As in the Cold War, when administrations of both parties followed the same roadmap in confronting the Soviet threat, there is remarkable continuity between administrations on post-9/11 policy. President Barack Obama retained key members of Bush's national-security team, modeled his Afghanistan surge after Bush's Iraq surge, expanded the drone war, continues helping

Afghans build institutions to resist jihadism, has embraced Bush's freedom agenda for the Middle East, and as evidenced by operations in Yemen and Pakistan, continues to strike terror targets with or without U.N. permission.

The Obama administration is also relying on military commissions set up by the Bush administration to try 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and other al-Qaida operatives. It has kept in place or expanded Bush's post-9/11 intelligence orders, and continues to employ Bush's indefinite-detention orders.

Likewise, despite all the heated rhetoric, Democrat- and Republican-controlled Congresses have blocked the movement of Gitmo detainees into the United States, extended the PATRIOT Act, invested hundreds of billions for homeland security, and appropriated \$1.3 trillion for wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and other fronts in the global war on terror.

**At home** Not only did 9/11 make those distracting news tickers a permanent part of our TV screens, but it also spawned an entire genre of shows centered on global terrorism: "The Unit," "24," "Threat Matrix" and "E-Ring" all focused on counterterrorism, while 9/11 heavily influenced the plotlines of "The West Wing," "CSI:NY" and "Rescue Me."

On the big screen, "World Trade Center," "United 93," "Munich," "The Kingdom" and "Fahrenheit 9/11" were among the films that wrestled with the attacks and their consequences. Likewise, the latest entry in the Batman franchise – with its terrorist villains, unappreciated hero, complicated moral dilemmas and grim remedies – seems a thinly-veiled parable for the post-9/11 world.

**At Sea** USS *New York*, with 15,000 pounds of steel from Ground Zero forged into its hull and "Never Forget" as its motto, was put to sea in 2009. USS *Arlington*, honoring the Pentagon, launched in 2010. USS *Somerset*, named for the county where Flight 93 went down, will soon join them.

**Europe** Al-Qaida inspired the March 2004 attacks against Spain's commuter trains, which killed 191 people, wounded 1,841 and toppled the Spanish government. Similar bombings in Britain killed 52 and injured 700 in July 2005.

## **USS New York: Built with 15,000 pounds of steel from Ground Zero**



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st class Corey Lewis

The al-Qaida onslaught drew NATO into Afghanistan, where the alliance is engaged in its largest, longest combat operation ever – 3,000 miles away from its Brussels headquarters.

**Djibouti** U.S. military personnel began arriving in Djibouti in 2003. A perfect perch for responding to terror threats in Africa and the Arabian peninsula, it hosts some 2,000 U.S. troops.

**Somalia** Lawless Somalia is an ideal environment for al-Qaida and its kindred movements. U.S. forces have struck terror targets there repeatedly since 9/11, including special-ops assaults in 2009, missile salvos in 2008, airstrikes and naval attacks in 2007, and backing Ethiopia's invasion in 2006.

**Yemen** Yemen may be the epicenter of al-Qaida activity today. The Yemeni branch of al-Qaida has been implicated in the 2010 parcel-bomb plot, the 2009 attempt to destroy Northwest 253, and prison breaks and attacks on Western embassy targets. In addition, Army psychiatrist Nidal Hasan, who killed 13 people during a 2009 shooting rampage at Fort Hood, routinely communicated with al-Qaida elements in Yemen.

**Saudi Arabia** Fifteen of the 19 hijackers behind 9/11 were from Saudi Arabia. So was bin Laden, who said in 1996 that the central aim of his global guerrilla war was "to expel the occupying enemy from the country of the two holy places," better known as Saudi Arabia.

After U.S. troops ejected Iraq's army from Kuwait in 1990, they stayed in Saudi Arabia to protect Saudi oil fields from Saddam's army. That galvanized al-Qaida, which carried out the 9/11 attacks that triggered America's war on terror.

By the end of August 2003, the United States had withdrawn its forces from Saudi Arabia. Yet it continues to play a role there, assisting with the creation of a 35,000-strong security force to protect Saudi oil facilities, the largest of which was targeted in a failed al-Qaida attack in 2006.

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**Iraq** Hussein's Iraq was not connected to the 9/11 attacks, but it was connected to Abu Musab Zarqawi, the bin Laden lieutenant who ignited Iraq's postwar civil war. According to British officials, Zarqawi traveled to Iraq in May 2002, met "senior Iraqis" and established a presence in Iraq six months before the U.S.-led invasion.

What Hussein failed to grasp in such risky dealings was that 9/11 had changed the very DNA of U.S. national-security policy. Was deterrence possible? Was containment viable? Was giving Baghdad the benefit of the doubt responsible? The Bush administration's answers were "no," leading to a war that toppled Saddam's regime and liberated 24 million Iraqis, followed by a postwar war that claimed more than 4,450 Americans.

Hussein's associations, behavior and record with weapons of mass destruction fueled a presumption of guilt that, when mixed with America's sense of vulnerability after 9/11, created a deadly combination. This is perhaps the most fundamental way 9/11 is linked to Hussein's Iraq: the latter did not perpetrate the former, but the former taught Washington a lesson about the danger of failing to confront threats before they are fully formed.

**Iran** Defectors from Iran's intelligence service recently testified in federal court that Iran had foreknowledge of the 9/11 attacks. Although the 9/11 Commission concluded that there is "strong evidence ... Iran facilitated the transit of al-Qaida members into and out of Afghanistan before 9/11," the panel found no evidence that Tehran was aware of the planning for 9/11.

What we do know is that the post-9/11 wars on Iran's borders had the effect of erasing Iran's main regional rivals, that Iranian-built bombs and Iranian-backed fighters have killed Americans in Afghanistan and Iraq, and that Iran is building a nuclear arsenal capable of doing far worse.

**Central Asia** Unknown to most Americans before 9/11, the so-called Stans of Central Asia have become increasingly critical of the war effort, serving as supply arteries into Afghanistan. Even Russia, America's Cold War enemy, has opened its territory to a steady stream of NATO cargo bound for Afghanistan.

**Afghanistan** It took just weeks for the United States to topple the medieval Taliban regime and smash al-Qaida's headquarters. A decade later, Afghanistan is free from the Taliban's reign, but still bleeding America.

## Osama bin Laden: Most wanted man on earth, living next door



Aqeel Ahmed/AP

**Pakistan** Since 9/11, there has been a debate over the dysfunctional Pakistani government, with one side arguing that Islamabad is doing its best to rein in its unwieldy intelligence service and military, and the other countering that Islamabad is complicit in what its intelligence operatives do – and what its military won't do. SEAL Team Six settled that debate. Elements of Pakistan's government had to know that the most wanted man on earth was living next door.

The bin Laden takedown is largely a symbol, underscoring America's resolve, resilience and reach. But just as the elimination of Yamamoto didn't end World War II, bin Laden's death doesn't end the war on terror – bin Laden is dead, but "bin Ladenism" is not.

**India** A jihadist group affiliated with al-Qaida laid siege to Mumbai in November 2008, killing 183 people, including six Americans.

**Indonesia** Al-Qaida claimed responsibility for the 2002 Bali bombings, which killed some 200 people.

**Philippines** Khalid Sheik Mohammed and Ramzi Yousef, the man behind the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, were based in the Philippines in the 1990s. After 9/11, U.S. special-ops units began assisting the Philippine army in its fight against al-Qaida affiliates. The result has been one of the most successful battles in the war on terror.

**Arlington, Va.** Arlington and other cemeteries hold more than 6,000 U.S. troops who have died waging "the wars of 9/11." The fallen are moms and dads, sons and daughters, sisters and brothers, husbands and wives, sweethearts and buddies – and heroes. 🌿

*Alan W. Dowd is a contributing editor for The American Legion Magazine.*

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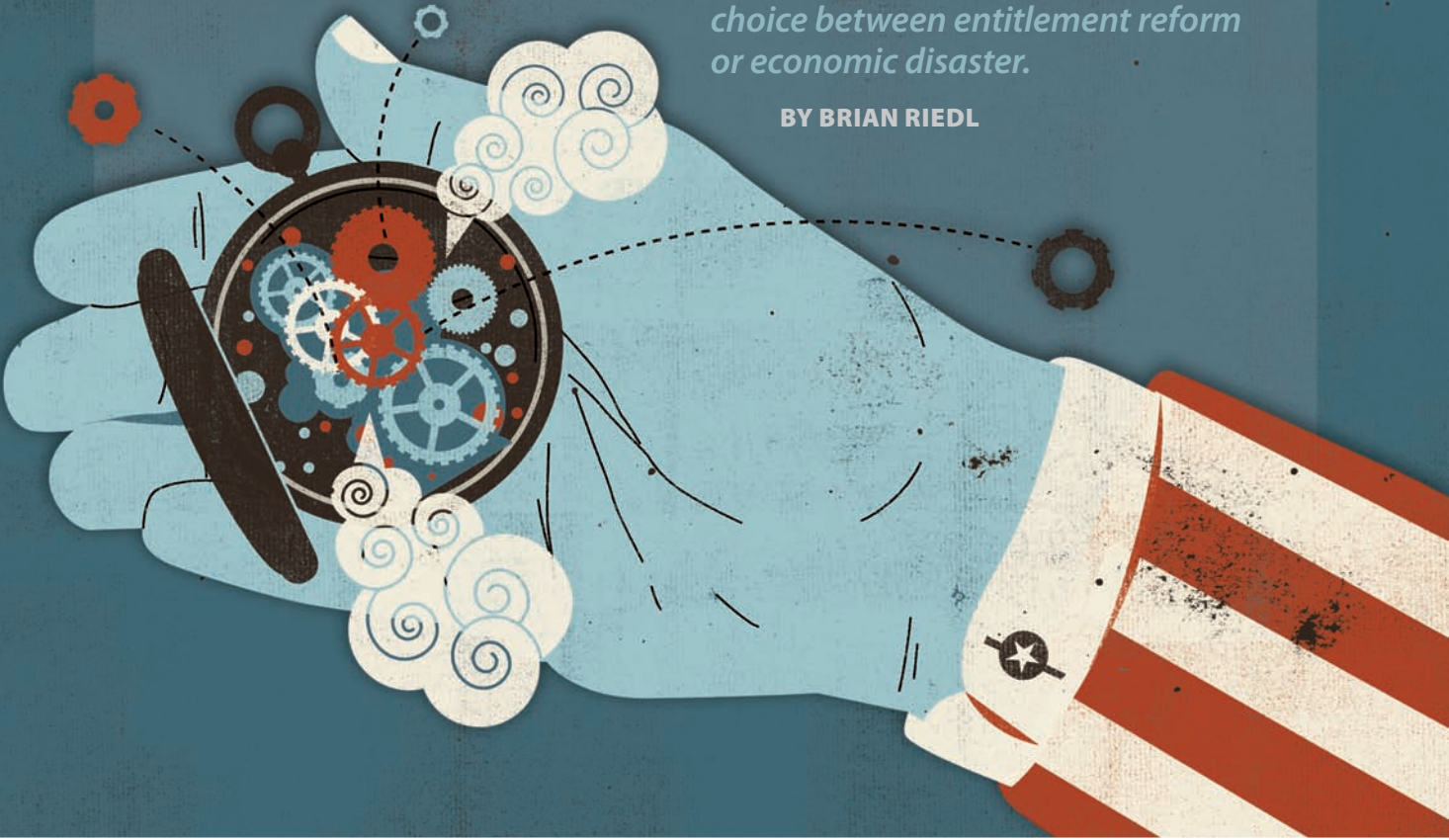
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# Zero Hour

*The United States faces a clear choice between entitlement reform or economic disaster.*

BY BRIAN RIEDL



Keith Negley/iSpot Illustrations

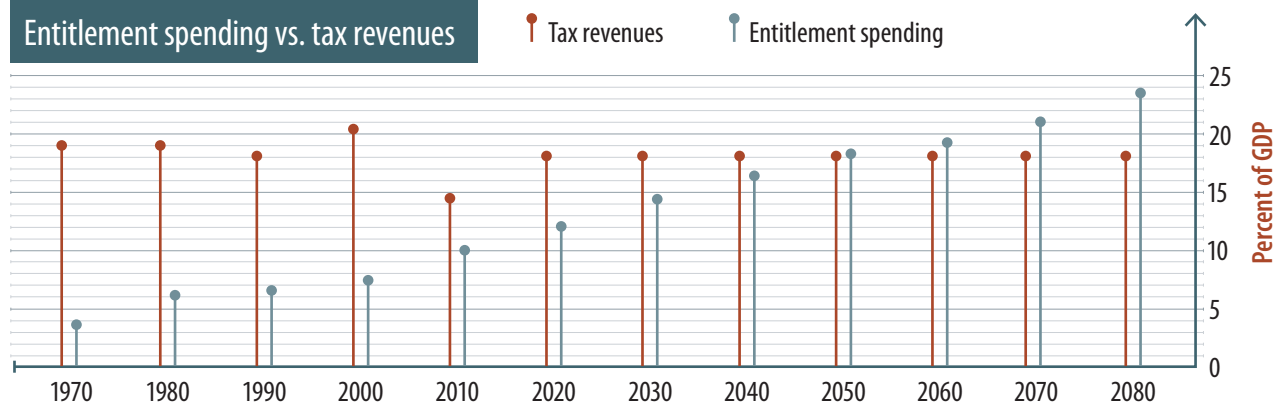
The United States is facing its greatest economic challenge in decades. Our response will set the course for the future of the American economy. Will we continue to create jobs and raise living standards, or will we enter an extended period of stagnation and decline? Will we leave our children and grandchildren better, or worse, off than us? Will the United States continue to be the economic envy of the world, or become just one more empire in decline?

I'm not talking about the current economic recession and sluggish recovery. The real long-term threat is the historic surge of government spending and debt.

Over the past decade, federal spending has expanded 61 percent, even after inflation. Most of that increase has come in just the past three years. Only during the height of World War II was the government larger than it is today. Thankfully, World War II ended, and spending went back down. But the current spending spree is set to accelerate until it leads to economic calamity.

The main culprit? The Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid costs of 77 million retiring baby boomers. Simply put, Washington has made expensive commitments that the economy and taxpayers will not be able to fulfill. Social Security and Medicare costs have already begun growing

## Entitlement spending vs. tax revenues



*If the average historical level of tax revenue is extended, spending on Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and the health-care subsidy program will consume all revenues by 2049. Because entitlement spending is funded on autopilot, no revenue will be left to pay for other government spending, including constitutional functions such as defense.* Congressional Budget Office

rapidly. Those two programs alone constitute unfunded obligations totaling \$43 trillion over the next 75 years. That's more than 60 times larger than the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) bailout of Wall Street. And every year, this fiscal hole deepens. The response of the United States to these incomprehensible costs will, in many ways, shape its economic future.

**How We Got Here.** Over the past half-century, Washington has typically spent 20 percent of the nation's total income, or gross domestic product (GDP). During that same period, tax revenues have averaged 18 percent of GDP, regardless of tax rates. Note that spending 20 percent, and taxing 18 percent, of GDP translated to yearly budget deficits of 2 percent of GDP. But as long as the economy continued growing, paying the interest on these modest deficits was relatively manageable.

Between 1998 and 2001, Washington actually ran budget surpluses. A temporary stock-market bubble pushed revenues up to 20 percent of GDP, while the end of the Cold War saved defense dollars and reduced spending to 18 percent of GDP. Unfortunately, by 2002, the stock-market bubble had burst, and the 9/11 attacks forced defense spending back up. Ultimately, Washington reverted to taxing at 18 percent of GDP and spending at 20 percent. These percentages led to a \$161 billion budget deficit in 2007.

Then the Great Recession hit, creating enormous deficits. With less income to tax, revenues plunged to 15 percent of GDP. Meanwhile, more people signed up for unemployment and welfare benefits, and Congress enacted a \$1 trillion "stimulus" and expensive financial bailouts. Federal spending soared to 25 percent of GDP, a post-World War II record.

Today's deficits are truly historic. In 2011, Washington will log its third consecutive budget deficit of 10 percent of GDP – nearly double the previous

post-World War II record. Before 2009, the largest budget deficit ever had been \$458 billion. The past three years have averaged deficits of \$1.4 trillion.

One might assume that an economic recovery will bring the federal budget back to those average levels. That assumption is only half right. Economic recovery is expected to return tax revenues to 18 percent of GDP, even if all 2001 and 2003 tax cuts are extended. However, spending is projected to continue rising past 26 percent of GDP by the end of the decade – and even that assumes peace, prosperity and low interest rates.

Rising spending – not falling revenues – is the moving variable driving these long-term deficits.

The numbers are staggering. Between 1789 and 2008, Washington accumulated a national debt of \$5.8 trillion. Between 2009 and 2021, it is set to borrow an additional \$17 trillion. In just 13 years, Washington will have quadrupled the national debt. A decade from now, yearly deficits are expected to approach \$2 trillion.

It gets worse. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that federal spending as a percentage of GDP will soar to 32 percent by 2030, 45 percent by 2050, and 75 percent by 2080. The total national debt is on pace to exceed the size of the entire economy by 2020, and rise to triple the size of the economy over the next few decades.

Obviously, the economy would collapse long before spending and debt reached those levels. Many economists now believe that within a decade, rising debt will, at best, cut our economic growth rate in half. More likely, it will precipitate an economic crisis. Many economic models, including those of the CBO, show complete collapse by the 2030s.

We can't wait that long before acting. Once a large debt builds, the net interest costs create even more debt. Allowing the national debt to quadruple between 2008 and 2021 would cause a permanent surge in interest rates that would slow



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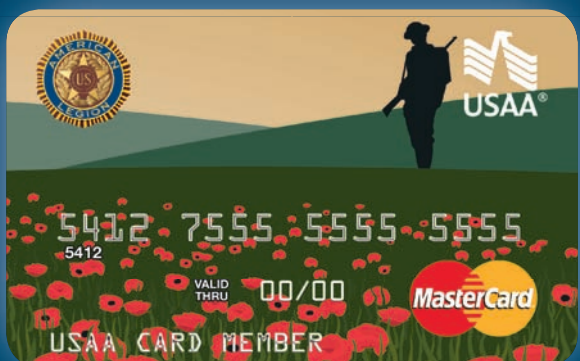
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economic growth. It would also mean that half of all income taxes would be needed just to pay the interest on the national debt. Preventing this means fundamentally reforming spending not in 2025, 2020, or even 2015. Reforms must come now.

**A Heavy Burden.** Let's set aside the temporary spending binge caused by the recession. In the long run, nearly all spending increases will come from four sources: Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid (the three largest entitlement programs), and net interest on the debt. Much of this is driven by simple demographics: a wave of 77 million baby boomers beginning to collect entitlement benefits. In each of these programs, current taxpayers finance current recipients. This system can be sustained as long as there are enough workers paying taxes to support the benefits of each retiree. In 1960, five workers supported one retiree. Today, that ratio has fallen to 3-to-1. By 2030, it will be just 2-to-1.

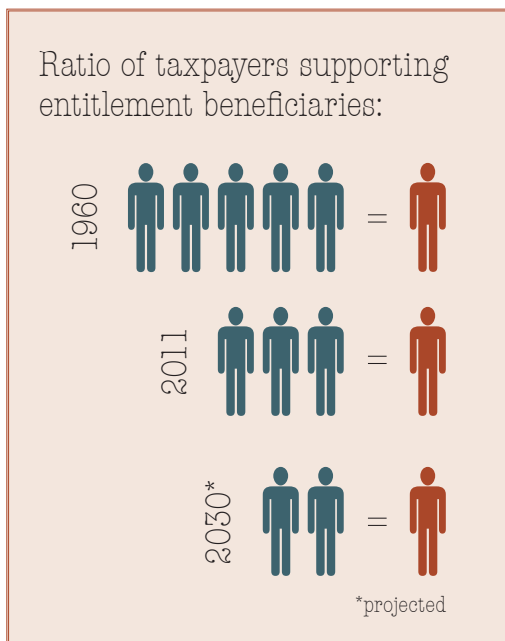
To understand the meaning of a 2-to-1 worker-to-retiree ratio, imagine two kids, in kindergarten today, who marry and start a family in 2030. They will try to figure out how to repay their student loans, buy a home, and afford children on their entry-level incomes. But they will also have to pay all the Social Security and Medicare benefits of their very own retiree. The burden will be enormous.

Beyond the demographic challenges, Medicare spending will be pushed up even further by rising health-care costs. Thus, over the next 75 years, Social Security faces a \$7 trillion deficit, and Medicare a \$36 trillion deficit. The baby boomers' long-term health-care expenses will also drive Medicaid costs upward. And putting those new costs on the national credit card will bring an enormous net-interest bill for the national debt. That is, unless they are reformed first.

This case for reform requires addressing two common myths about Social Security and Medicare.

The first myth is that baby boomers will be getting back only the amount they paid into these programs. In reality, a recent Urban Institute study shows that a 56-year-old married couple now earning an average income will pay \$820,000 into Social Security and Medicare over their lifetimes, yet receive \$1,040,000 in total benefits. Their highest return will be in Medicare, where this couple will receive \$3 in benefits for every \$1 they paid into the system.

The other myth is that the Social Security trust fund has the means to pay all benefits until 2037. It is true that Social Security ran a \$3 trillion surplus between 1983 and 2009, before entering permanent deficits last year. However, Congress has already spent that surplus money on other programs. As infuriating as this may be, the fact remains that the money is gone, replaced with paper IOUs in a filing cabinet at the Bureau of Public Debt in Parkersburg, W.Va. Sure, Congress could pay full benefits until 2037 by redeeming those \$3 trillion in IOUs, but that requires raising taxes, or cutting other spending by the entire \$3 trillion. So while the trust fund does exist, it doesn't reduce the burden on future taxpayers by even one penny.



**No Easy Alternatives.** The reforms needed to bring spending and deficits under control will not be easy. Over the next decade, Washington is scheduled to tax \$35 trillion, and spend \$48 trillion (truly astounding amounts). Of that

spending, \$21 trillion will go toward Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, and \$7 trillion toward interest on the debt. Totally eliminating widely unpopular programs such as foreign aid (\$0.5 trillion over the next decade), corporate welfare (\$1 trillion) and even President Barack Obama's health-care program (\$1 trillion) comes nowhere close to offsetting these major entitlement costs. Certainly, some of the cuts would be worth it (every dollar helps), but they do not avert the need for entitlement reform. Even ending all funding for the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan (\$0.5 trillion)



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It wasn't more than ten years ago that we met with former U.S. Mint Director Donna Pope. She spoke with pride about what she considered to be her greatest achievement as Director under President Reagan: Creation of the American Eagle silver and gold bullion coin programs, the first of their kind in our nation's history.

The purpose of these coins was to give people the opportunity to own physical silver and gold in a form certified for weight and purity by the U.S. Mint. While the bullion coin program was a signal success, nobody took into account the profound effect it would have on the collector market.

### Silver Eagles = Today's Morgan Dollars

In the 1800s and early 1900s, the U.S. Morgan Silver Dollar was struck year upon year at various mints and circulated at face value. Their core value was in their precious metal content. However, in top grades, Morgan Silver Dollars can sell today for tens and even hundreds of thousands of dollars each!

For the same reason, many collectors today see the Silver Eagle series as a literal "ground floor" opportunity to acquire the top-grade coins as they are released. They started submitting Silver Eagles to the leading independent coin grading services, Professional Coin Grading Service (PCGS) and Numismatic Guaranty Corporation (NGC), praying that the coins would come back with the highest possible grade: MS70 (all Uncirculated coins are graded on a point system from a low of 60 to a high of 70, with 70 representing flawless perfection). Of all the Silver Eagles produced by the U.S. Mint in 2010, less than one out of every 681 earned the NGC MS70 grade!

### MS70 = \$\$\$\$\$!

In the rarified atmosphere of MS70, Silver Eagles have soared to market prices that I can only characterize as surreal. Consider this: MS70 Silver Eagles have been selling for truly stratospheric prices. Here are just a few eye-popping examples:

1996 MS70 Silver Eagle	\$5,690
1988 MS70 Silver Eagle	\$3,190
1991 MS70 Silver Eagle	\$2,810
1994 MS70 Silver Eagle	\$1,470

### It Just Keeps Getting Better

I was thrilled to lock up a guaranteed supply of Perfect Gem MS70 2011 Silver Eagles from a primary distributor who gets them directly from the U.S. Mint. (This is a coin you cannot buy directly from the U.S. Mint). Moreover, every coin is certified and encapsulated by NGC, one of the top two firms for grading coins. But better yet, because we received the very first coins released from the mint, they all have the value-enhancing "Early Release" designation.

### What Does "Early Release" Mean?

NGC designates only those coins it certifies as having been released during the first 30 days of issue as Early Release. Collectors place a premium on these coins because they are struck from freshly made dies, which is thought to impart superior quality. Only a minuscule number of the mintage gets the Early Release pedigree.

This Early Release certification can turbo charge the value of an already valuable MS70 coin. For example, a MS70 2006 20th Anniversary Silver Eagle from the West Point Mint is valued at \$2,000—but but add the NGC "Early Release" pedigree and the value skyrockets to \$2,995—that's 50% more!



Actual size is 40.6 mm

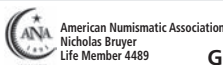
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When Mom and Dad buy a home they cannot afford, the solution is not to tell their children to get second and third jobs. The solution is for Mom and Dad to scale back their spending and move to a less expensive neighborhood.

would not avert the need for fundamental entitlement reform, especially since Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and interest costs are set to double again in the 2020s.

On the tax side, the story is the same. Repealing the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts for those earning more than \$250,000 annually would raise just \$0.7 trillion over the next decade. Repealing them for everyone – which would mean steep tax hikes for low-income families – would raise only \$3 trillion. And even that assumes that the tax hikes would not harm the economy (thereby reducing the amount of income to tax). It also assumes that Washington would actually apply all new tax revenues to deficit reduction, when so far nearly every tax increase signed by President Obama has gone toward new spending instead.

The CBO found that fully financing all projected government spending would require putting middle-income households in a 63-percent tax bracket, and upper-income households and small businesses in an 88-percent bracket. That is a recipe for economic disaster. And besides, how is drowning our children and grandchildren in exorbitant taxes any more compassionate than drowning them in debt? The only viable solution is to address the source of the debt: runaway entitlement spending.

In short, there is no easy alternative. The choice is between reforming Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, and economic catastrophe.

**The Path Forward.** Today's budget debates are not just about numbers. They are about our future, and whether the next generation of Americans will have any hope of matching the living standards of their parents.

Social Security and Medicare do represent a social contract. But no social contract should involve bankrupting a generation not yet old enough to vote. When Mom and Dad buy a home they cannot afford, the solution is not to tell their children to get second and third jobs. The solution is for Mom and Dad to scale back their spending and move to a less expensive neighborhood.

Social Security and Medicare have been among the most successful and popular government

programs ever. But the bills are piling up faster than we can borrow. If these programs are to survive, they must modernize.

Reform does not mean cutting off low-income seniors. If done right – and soon – reform can protect all seniors from poverty, without bankrupting their children and grandchildren.

First, Washington should put Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid on a long-term budget with yearly spending caps. Then, Social Security can be saved by gradually raising the eligibility age to reflect longer life spans, and by trimming benefits for upper-income seniors while strengthening them for lower-income seniors.

Medicare can be saved by reducing government subsidies to the wealthiest seniors and, instead, asking them to assume more of their own insurance costs. These programs would work more like real home or disability insurance, where benefits are provided when needed rather than delivered in an unlimited stream regardless of need.

In the long run, Medicare can be saved by transforming it into a premium support program, which seniors can use to choose their own qualified health plan with a government subsidy. That system – much like what members of Congress currently enjoy – would put patients in charge, and allow choice, competition and transparency to reduce costs. Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., has proposed phasing in this system for Medicare.

Time is critical to success. These reforms must be implemented within the next few years. Otherwise, the rising national debt will cause permanent economic damage. And the longer we wait, the less time baby boomers will have to adjust to the new policies.

We can choose a future of escalating spending, debt and taxes, followed by economic calamity. Or we can responsibly bring government programs in line with economic reality. The future of the American economy – and the future of our children and grandchildren – depends on which path we choose. 🌿

*Brian Riedl is a former Grover M. Hermann Fellow in Federal Budgetary Affairs at The Heritage Foundation.*

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# A new generation of veterans confronts post-traumatic stress.

## ARTICLES

KEN OLSEN

## PHOTOS

AMY C. ELLIOTT

*Melissa Seligman with  
portraits of her father,  
Paul Sutton, who  
served in Vietnam, and  
her husband, David,  
who has been  
deployed to both Iraq  
and Afghanistan.*



## A chronology of combat trauma

**800 B.C.** | In the "Iliad," Homer chronicles combat trauma and survivor's guilt resulting from the Trojan Wars.

**1688** | Military post-traumatic stress is first described in medical literature as "nostalgia" by Swiss physician Johannes Hofer.

**Napoleonic Wars** | Napoleon's chief surgeon recommends a treatment regimen of exercise, listening to music and "useful instruction" for conditions related to combat stress. Symptoms include anxiety, insomnia, melancholy, and heart palpitations.

**Civil War** | The Union Army identifies 5,200 cases of nostalgia and 2,600 cases of insanity among the troops. In 1864, the War Department orders some of the soldiers transferred to the Government Hospital until their families can retrieve them.

**1871** | Dr. Jacob Mendes Da Costa observes rapid heart rate, anxiety and hyperarousal among military personnel, giving rise to the term "soldier's heart."

# THE WAR WITHIN

## PART I: FAMILIES AFFLICTED



The American Legion's support for veterans suffering from combat stress began shortly after World War I. Newly discharged troops were turning up in jails, hospitals, asylums and on street corners, having suddenly lost contact with their friends, families and themselves. They were shell-shocked and haunted by battles long thought to be over. Legion research illuminated the problem, and helped lead to the creation of the modern VA. Today, after decades of wars and research into the condition, it has a new name – post-traumatic stress – but it remains as mystifying as ever. The Iraq and Afghanistan generation is coming home with a strain all its own, often compounded by traumatic brain injury. A special American Legion committee has been working with top national mental-health experts to find new answers to an old problem, one that stands to strain families across the country for decades to come. The following pages portray just a fraction of those families and how they are handling lives changed by war trauma.

**World War I** | Soldiers with "staring eyes," violent tremors, inexplicable deafness, blindness or paralysis are described as suffering from "shell shock." The U.S. Army Surgeon General's guidelines, issued in 1917, call for "immediacy," "simplicity," and "expectancy" (of return to the front lines) in treatment.

**World War II** | The medical community describes PTS as "combat fatigue" and begins to study the connection between the condition and duration/intensity of combat.

**Korean War** | The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM), the definitive reference for psychological conditions, calls PTS "stress-response syndrome."

**Vietnam War** | Veterans are treated for "stress-response syndrome." If symptoms last more than six months after returning from Vietnam, they are judged to be suffering from a pre-existing condition, not PTS.

**1980** | The American Psychological Association identifies PTSD as a distinct diagnosis.

Sources: VA War Related Illness and Injury Study Center, "Achilles in Vietnam" by Dr. Jonathan Shay



Melissa Seligman started shaking when her husband described the aftermath of a suicide bombing he witnessed during his first deployment to Iraq. She had heard that same flat, detached tone, from her father, when he described seeing a helicopter gunner's leg get blown off in Vietnam.

"There's something so horrible about somebody being so traumatized ... there's no emotion attached," Seligman says. "My dad would talk like that. My entire insides would shake until I didn't know what to do."

She eventually realized that the post-traumatic stress that had haunted her father now dogged her husband.

Hundreds of thousands of military families face similar dilemmas as combat troops suffering from PTS come home, attempt to get jobs, reintegrate into society, mend fractured personal relationships and get help from VA's overwhelmed mental health care system. It's a dilemma that reopens invisible wounds for Vietnam veterans who don't want today's generation to endure the same mistreatment they faced when they came home from war. It's also a cautionary tale for a nation too often insulated from the mental-health consequences of wartime military service. The Vietnam experience demonstrates that the price of not treating PTS is paid in suicide, substance abuse, homelessness, unemployment, divorce and domestic violence.

"We're sending our people over there with a very high risk they will come back with psychological problems, and we're not prepared," says Susan Selke, whose son, Marine Corps veteran Clay Hunt, committed suicide after battling PTS and survivor's guilt.

*ABOVE: David Seligman and his father-in-law, Paul Sutton. Seligman's example – and daughter Melissa's work with her blog – encouraged Sutton to get help for his own lingering PTS.*

Photo courtesy Melissa Seligman

## "Substantial unmet need for care."

Some 300,000 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans – nearly 20 percent of returning troops – are coming home with PTS or depression, according a 2008 study by the RAND Corporation, a nonprofit research group. Roughly half have sought treatment from VA. There is "substantial unmet need for care," RAND reports.

This spring, a federal appeals court declared VA's mental-health care system broken, and ordered a lower court to find a way to end delays in care delivery that may be costing veterans their lives. Nearly 86,000 veterans were languishing on VA waiting lists for mental-health care as of April 2008, "a number that may significantly under-represent the scale of the problem both then and now," the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said. The court blamed gross inefficiency, not a lack of funding, for VA problems that leave veterans "suffering and dying, heedlessly and needlessly."

Statistics, however, only capture a snapshot in time, says Dr. Julie C. Chapman, director of neuroscience at VA's War Related Illness and Injury Study Center in Washington. It may be years, or even decades, before the mental-health toll of the current wars is known. "Symptoms can submerge and then re-emerge many years later, sometimes during stress or life change."

## "Knowing what war is all about ... it was hard for me to see him go through that."

The Vietnam nightmares grew steadily worse for Melissa Seligman's father after his son-in-law, David, began deploying to Afghanistan and Iraq in 2003. "Knowing what war is all about, it was hard for me to see him go through that," says Paul Sutton. "You live with it for the rest of your life."

Sutton joined the Air Force on his 17th birthday, and went to Southeast Asia 18 months later. He served four months rescuing downed U.S. pilots, and another year with a unit that provided air-to-ground radio support for allied forces. Coming home in 1966 was worse than he imagined. He says the civilian world either hated him, didn't understand him, or both.

"There was no support and no appreciation at all for serving my country," Sutton says. "I did not want to be around anyone. It is still hard for me to be around people."

He returned home to Kentucky, where he raised his daughter in the outdoors – canoeing, flying and rappelling. She learned to sit quietly with him for hours, seeing things in her father she did not understand. "I knew the war had impacted him," she says. "But I didn't have any words to describe it."

She remembers how his jaw would clench and he would go silent whenever he saw a photo of a buddy from Vietnam. She remembers his startled reactions whenever she touched him.

She remembers telling the story of a little Vietnamese girl who visited his camp. He gave the girl candy and invited her back. She returned with a grenade, pulled the pin, and blew

## The case against the 'D'

Post-traumatic stress disorder has carried a potent stigma since the American Psychological Association defined the term for the lingering effects of combat and other terrifying experiences. Blame it on the word "disorder."

Some World War II and Korean War veterans scorned Vietnam veterans when they talked about PTSD, says Thom Paca, who served in Southeast Asia in 1968 and 1969. "They thought we were pansies," Paca recalls. "They thought we should buck up and get over it."

More than half of active-duty soldiers believe that seeking help such as counseling will hurt their careers, according to the Army's comprehensive Health Promotion/Risk Reduction/Suicide Prevention Report. The soldiers who most need help frequently do not seek it out.

"Until the stigma associated with behavioral-health treatment can be overcome, the Army should continue to look at alternative methods for identifying soldiers who may be in need of such care," the report concluded.

American Legion Past National Commander William Detweiler says it's time to bring the language in line with reality.

Post-traumatic stress "is an injury based on a catastrophic event," says Detweiler, chairman of the Legion's ad hoc committee on traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress. "Calling it a disorder is what creates the stigma."

That stigma is just as much a product of society as it is a perception of the military community.

"The general feeling I get from people is, 'These poor soldiers,'" says David Seligman, who is getting counseling for PTS after three deployments. "(It's as if) you are a vegetable sitting in a corner drooling on yourself. There are plenty of guys who are phenomenal soldiers who have PTSD."

Jake Wood, who served combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, says PTSD is a normal reaction to abnormal circumstances. "Just because you have PTSD doesn't mean you're crazy. It just means you have seen a lot of crazy stuff, and are understandably scarred from it."

herself up. A few years ago, Seligman's father told her the rest of the story, the part that most torments him.

"He sat there and cried and said, 'I did that to her.'"

**"I was getting eaten alive by things I didn't understand."** When U.S. troops returned from Vietnam, America largely failed to welcome them home and could not grasp the magnitude of their mental wounds. Ken Jones felt no connection to life in the States when he came home in 1968 after a year as a scout-squad leader with the 11th Cavalry. He wanted to return to Vietnam, where he understood his place. "You come to the question of core identity," Jones says. "There's a cultural displacement when you come back and realize, in a very short time, the place you thought of as home no longer exists."

Eight months later, Jones started suffering severe anxiety. His blood pressure skyrocketed. "I was getting eaten alive by things I didn't understand," Jones says. The trip-wire anger he unintentionally brought home from Vietnam had one benefit: it triggered adrenaline rushes that vanquished his bouts of depression.

Jones threw himself into his work as a financial adviser and pension-management consultant. He went running at night to

exhaust his demons. In the late 1970s, he started writing about his nightmares, which became the basis for his book "When Our Troops Come Home."

Thom Paca unraveled before he left the war zone. Nine months into his tour as an infantry-weapons squad leader, he "whipped a fellow pretty good with a machine gun," told off his lieutenant and fled into the jungle. Paca's buddies tracked him down and persuaded him to return. His commander decided he had battle fatigue, and shipped him to Japan for a psychiatric evaluation.

"I was found 'physically fit but not responsible for my actions,'"

Paca says. That was all the mental-health treatment he received. He returned to Vietnam and spent the last three months of his deployment confined to camp without a weapon. He finished his Army hitch stateside, and left the minute his discharge papers were signed, declining to stay even one extra day for a medical evaluation.

Thirty years, two failed marriages and a string of jobs later, Paca was diagnosed with PTSD after a fellow Vietnam War veteran encouraged him to get help. Today anxiety, mood swings and stress are straining his third marriage. "I tell him we have a 50-50 chance," Paca's wife, Sharon, says. "But we're still trying."



*Vietnam War veteran Thom Paca has struggled for years with the effects of PTSD, suffering setbacks in employment, his personal life and more. Today, he receives VA assistance, but his third marriage is under stress.*

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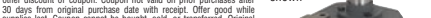
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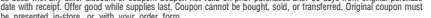
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## When doing everything right isn't enough

*A Marine's suicide shows that even the unlikeliest veteran can fall through the cracks.*

Of all the questions raised by Clay Hunt's suicide, perhaps the most perplexing is this: why did a 28-year-old former Marine who was receiving VA health care, taking medications for post-traumatic stress and publicly pushing fellow veterans to get help, give up?

"I think if Clay can lose his battle with PTSD, anyone can," says Jake Wood, Hunt's best friend from the Marines. "He was taking all of the right steps to get help, and he fell through the cracks. The VA system failed him in a very dramatic way."

John Wordin, executive director of Ride 2 Recovery and another of Hunt's friends, says Clay's death "tells us we're not doing enough. It will haunt myself and Clay's mother for a long time."

Hunt grew up riding his bicycle and collecting turtles on the banks of Buffalo Bayou in west Houston. He attended Memorial Drive Methodist Church, where the youth pastor inspired him to volunteer by repairing homes in poor neighborhoods across the South. Hunt played sports and scored well on college-entrance exams, but didn't have the class rank to gain entrance into first choice Texas A&M. After four on-and-off years of community college, he finally earned admission to Texas A&M, but instead decided to join the Marines.

"He said, 'I want to do something bigger than myself, something that is not just about me,'" says Hunt's mother, Susan Selke. Her son explained it all in a telephone call in the

spring of 2005. "It was hard to get that phone call, but it was a good decision for Clay to make at that point in his life. He definitely excelled in the Marines."

Hunt and Wood became friends after being assigned to the same infantry platoon a year later. They were about the same age, had both attended college and had similar interests. "He was a loyal, caring person," Wood says.

The pair deployed to Iraq in January 2007. By early March, they had lost two good friends. Hunt's bunkmate, Blake Howey, was killed by a roadside bomb. Nathan Windsor was mortally wounded when their convoy was attacked. Hunt, pinned down by enemy fire, couldn't help Windsor and couldn't return fire.

Windsor died while being airlifted to a hospital.

Those deaths changed Hunt, says his father, Stacy, who received a call from his son soon after Windsor was killed. "For the first time, I could sense a real fear in his voice."

Then a sniper's bullet ripped through Hunt's wrist in March. He was sent back to the United States to recover. "He hated leaving his buddies there," Stacy Hunt says. "He knew what those guys were going through outside of Fallujah."

Selke says that's when the PTS started – "the trauma of being shot and being separated from his group."

A Purple Heart and PTS did not end Hunt's combat days, as the family expected. Instead, he rejoined Wood and



*Former Marine Clay Hunt took his own life at 28. Courtesy Susan Selke*

**LEFT:** Susan Selke, Clay Hunt's mother, and her husband, Richard, hold the flag given to her at Hunt's funeral.

**BELOW RIGHT:** Holding his son's baseball mitt, Clay Hunt's father, Stacy, says he wants to find a "way to save more lives."

became one of the Marine Corps' elite scout-snipers. He got married just before his platoon was sent to Afghanistan in March 2008. Soon after his arrival, two close friends from his former platoon were killed.

"He was starting to get disillusioned with the mission and the war, and it made it really tough for him," Wood says. "We felt pretty impotent sitting back there in Kandahar twiddling our thumbs while our guys are out there getting killed." Hunt's platoon returned to the United States in October 2008, and he left the Marines the following spring.

Re-entering the civilian world was rough. Delays in getting GI Bill benefits forced him to live off his credit cards when he enrolled at Loyola Marymount University.

"It puts stress on every aspect of your life when you have \$15,000 in credit-card debt, you aren't making any money, your wife isn't making much money, you're standing in line four hours to get a counseling appointment, struggling with your transition, and you have to beat your head against the wall to get your benefits," Wood says.

Hunt's frustrations mounted. VA lost his disability-claim paperwork, forcing him to revisit doctors and reconstruct his 200-page file. That exacerbated his PTSD, anxiety and exhaustion. "Clay told me, 'I have to grovel for my benefits,'" Selke says.

Hunt also struggled to understand why he had been spared. The vivid memory of being unable to help his mortally wounded friend, lying on the road in front of him in Iraq, tortured him.

"He told me, 'It's like a bad movie on rewind. It plays, it rewinds, plays, rewinds,'" Selke says. "The medications he took didn't help."

Still, Hunt openly embraced his PTSD and survivor's guilt. "He said, 'I've got a wicked case of PTSD, and I'm going to work on it,'" Selke says. Hunt appeared in public-service announcements for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) encouraging other veterans to get help. He went to Haiti and Chile with Team Rubicon – a volunteer group Wood co-founded – to aid earthquake victims. He volunteered with Ride 2 Recovery, a Los Angeles-based group that builds bicycles and organizes rides for wounded veterans. He appealed for a higher disability rating from VA.

"He was two different guys," Wordin says. "He was Clay Hunt, happy-go-lucky guy, who loved to ride bicycles. And he was Clay Hunt, haunted man, dealing with issues of watching his buddies die in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was quite straightforward about it: 'John, there are some days I just want to kill myself.'"

Hunt filed for divorce in late spring 2010. Two weeks after returning to college, depression overtook him. He called his mother and told her he was almost unable to function. She talked him into going to VA for help. He briefly lived in Wordin's guest room before deciding to move back to Houston.

Hunt landed a job with a construction company, found an apartment and bought a new truck soon after returning to his hometown. He started dating again. He registered at the Houston VA, and in mid-March, a psychiatrist agreed to switch him back to an antidepressant with fewer side effects. But after a two-hour wait in the pharmacy, Hunt was told that VA didn't stock Lexapro because it was a name-brand drug. The pharmacy told him it would mail the prescription, and sent him on his way without the antidepressant/antianxiety medication he desperately needed, his mother says.

Hunt left the VA more dispirited than ever.



"Antidepressants take time to start to work," Selke says. "He didn't have time to wait for a mailout to reach him. I don't know why his medication was not considered an urgent need. I guarantee you our members of Congress have better medical care, with a less cumbersome system. It is not fair for our veterans to have anything less than the best medical care our country has to offer."

VA says it cannot comment on Hunt's case. A spokeswoman at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center in Houston says its pharmacy began carrying Lexapro within the past year, at the request of psychiatrists. It's not clear if the pharmacy had the medication on hand the day Hunt tried to fill his prescription.

Hunt shot himself in his Houston-area apartment on March 31. Five weeks later, his mother received a letter from VA saying he had won his appeal for a higher disability rating.

"It was like a kick in the gut," Selke says. "He was gone."

Family and friends are left with questions and doubts. Even if there are no clear answers, the suicide leaves them convinced that the nation must do whatever it takes to ensure that the tens of thousands of troops coming home with PTSD, depression and other invisible wounds get the help they need, without delay.

"We are trying to have Clay's story punctuate a problem," his father says. "His death tells me there are many more like him who are very frustrated and may do what he did. We've got to find a way to save more lives."



*Retired nurse Arlene Lynch worked with Vietnam War veterans in a VA psych ward in the late 1990s. She is still deeply affected by the isolation and frustration her former patients experienced.*

Such stories are familiar to retired nurse Arlene Lynch, who worked with Vietnam War veterans in the Seattle VA Medical Center psychiatric ward in the late 1990s.

"These were kids who should have been driving around in cars looking at girls" instead of going into combat, Lynch says. "They didn't know what to do with the rage and the anger. It's no surprise they melted down."

Coming home to a nation that didn't want to hear about the war exacerbated the trauma.

"They learned to keep their heads down and their mouths shut," Lynch

says. "But they couldn't keep all that stuff inside. It manifests itself in suicide, drinking, drug abuse, murders, not being able to do jobs or keep relationships. It was common knowledge among the guys on the psych unit at the VA that twice as many Vietnam vets died from suicide as died in battle."

Indeed, Jones thought he was going to kill himself or go crazy when he finally went to a VA vet center in Anchorage in 1980. He showed some of his Vietnam writings to a counselor, who read six pages and told him, "You've come to the right place. We speak this lingo." Even then, it would take years of work for Jones to get a handle on his stress, depression and anxiety.

"We said, 'We don't know what we are, but we aren't that.'" The medical community had trouble understanding what Vietnam veterans were going through, even though references to combat trauma and survivor's guilt date back to Homer's account of the Trojan Wars. They met with everything from skepticism to misdiagnosis to ridicule.

## Legion TBI/PTS Committee

During the 2010 Fall Meetings, The American Legion's National Executive Committee passed a resolution establishing a special TBI/PTS ad hoc committee. The committee, which includes past national commanders and medical experts, is charged with investigating the existing science and procedures, along with newer, alternative methods, for treating traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress. Since its inception, the committee has worked with medical schools to recruit wounded warriors for clinical trials, reviewed numerous reports, received briefings and toured Walter Reed Army Medical Center to meet with soldiers dealing with TBI and PTS, to better understand their conditions.

"One of the most important contributions of Vietnam veterans was they refused to accept the diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia from VA or civilian doctors," Jones said.

"We said, 'We don't know what we are, but we aren't that.'"

Similar symptoms may have caused confusion, Chapman says. "One of the potential diagnostic criteria for schizophrenia are hallucinations. A soldier's description of flashbacks might have led a clinician to consider hallucinations, associated with schizophrenia. Similarly, when an individual is exhibiting strong hypervigilance, it might look like paranoia – particularly before PTSD was well-understood."

The experience of Vietnam veterans brought post-traumatic stress to the attention of the medical community and the nation. "Although combat exposure increases the risk of PTSD in any conflict, a greater number of veterans of the Vietnam War experienced PTSD than have been identified in other conflicts," Chapman says. "Awareness was raised, and attention was focused."

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## Military sexual trauma emerges as a major cause of PTS

Rebekah Havrilla endured four years of relentless sexual harassment and was raped by a fellow soldier toward the end of her tour defusing roadside bombs in Afghanistan, she says. By the end, "I just wanted to survive. I just wanted to go home. I just wanted to get out of the Army."

Leaving the Army, however, didn't put an end to Havrilla's nightmares and anxiety. She's one of tens of thousands of servicemembers who suffer from post-traumatic stress as a result of military sexual trauma (MST). Her case is unusual, however, in that she's receiving some VA disability benefits. MST survivors face a higher burden of proof than combat veterans when applying for PTS benefits. Most are turned away.

Approximately two-thirds of MST claims for PTS are rejected or returned to the veteran for additional documentation, according to data the Service Women's Action Network (SWAN) obtained in a public-records lawsuit against VA.

"The military-sexual-trauma survivor is punished again," says Anuradha Bhagwati, a former Marine captain and executive director of SWAN, which has a separate class-action suit against the Department of Defense over the harassment and assaults. "The government wins, at the end of the day, because they don't have to award benefits."

Survivors face a perplexing double standard from VA when they file PTS claims, says Greg Jacob, a former Marine who is now policy director for SWAN. Last year, VA eased the burden of proof for combat PTS claims. Essentially, veterans no longer need independent evidence to confirm they were exposed to enemy threats such as roadside bombs or mortar attacks.

Sexual-trauma survivors, however, still have to submit corroborating evidence of their assault. That's a significant challenge, even if they report harassment or assault at the time it happens. DoD only keeps rape kits for a year, and sexual-harassment investigations for two years. By the time an assault survivor gets out of the service and files a PTS claim with VA, the evidence has usually been destroyed, Jacob says.

VA allows so-called secondary evidence, such as statements from friends, relatives or others with whom the survivor may have confided about the assault. It's meaningless, Jacob says. "VA says you can submit it. But it has no guidance for the claims officer to accept it, and hasn't published anything about what the burden of proof is."

**Open Access.** One arm of VA is being praised for helping MST survivors deal with PTS. The Veterans Health Administration, which oversees hospitals, clinics and patient care, "has done a remarkable job with military sexual trauma," Jacob says. "It will give you any necessary care for free, even if you don't qualify as service-connected." The Veterans Benefits Administration, which makes claims decisions, "needs to catch up," he says.

That observation is borne out by Greg Jeloudov's experience. Jeloudov says he was harassed and then raped during basic training in 2009. When he tried to report the assault, he says he was forced to sign a statement falsely admitting he was gay, and discharged from the Army under the "don't ask, don't tell" policy. "I feared for my life and the safety of my family," he says. "I had to get out."

Jeloudov has been unable to keep a job as a result of the trauma, and is estranged from his wife and stepsons, he says. His claim was rejected, but VA has provided medical care for him since September 2010.

"VA has given me a helping hand addressing my issues," Jeloudov says. "I've been seeing an excellent doctor and excellent social workers." VA also responded to his request to be re-examined, by female VA doctors, when he appealed his claim denial. "They listened to me," he says.

However, Jeloudov is still unsure if the VA regional office will grant him benefits. "I'm still waiting for the flick of their pen to decide my fate."

**Career Crash.** Many veterans mourn military careers cut short by sexual trauma. Air Force reservist Mary Gallagher was diagnosed with PTS and taken out of the line of duty two months after she was allegedly sexually assaulted by a fellow tech sergeant while they were stationed in Baghdad in November 2009. She expects to be fully discharged by the end of the year unless her condition improves. "I am sad my



*Greg Jeloudov was forced to sign a false statement, and discharged from the Army, after reporting an assault.*

**Burden of Proof.** Military sexual trauma is the leading cause of post-traumatic stress among female veterans. The extent of the problem is unknown, because victims are reluctant to come forward. The Pentagon estimates that there were more than 19,000 sexual assaults in the ranks in 2010 – an increase of about 3,000 from 2009. Only 3,158 were officially reported. About 40 percent of MST survivors are men. Around 25 percent of sexual assaults occur during combat deployments.

career had to end with something that never should have happened in the first place," she says.

Gallagher was sent to Iraq in September 2009 with an Air National Guard detachment from Massachusetts. She alerted her supervisor that a fellow tech sergeant started stalking her and tried to break into her room after she rebuffed his sexual advances. Her supervisor's response: "Hey, this stuff happens. Don't worry about it."

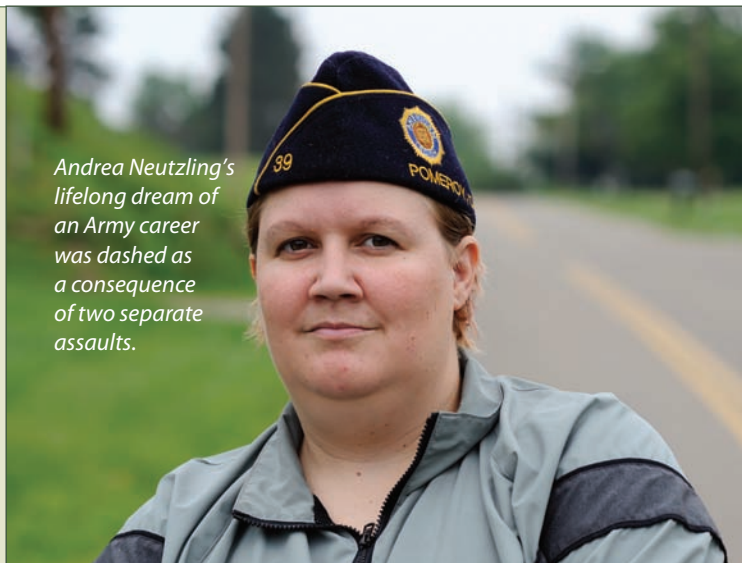
A week later, Gallagher says, the tech sergeant sexually assaulted her in the women's restroom. Gallagher bypassed her supervisor and called her home unit in Rhode Island. "I was scared to death," Gallagher says. "He could have easily killed me that day, gotten rid of the body, and reported me as AWOL." The commanders from Gallagher's home unit arranged for her transfer back to the United States and connected her to counseling. A year and a half later, she is planning a new career as a veterans' advocate, but remains disenchanted with the military's response. Her assailant was not convicted and is still in uniform. "(That's) the strongest evidence that the program the military has in place to deal with this issue isn't working," she says.

Andrea Neutzling shares that frustration. She says she was sexually assaulted twice during her 10 years in the Army and Army Reserve. The first incident, in Korea in 2002, resulted in her assailant being confined to base for five days. Then, in 2005, she was allegedly raped by two soldiers from another unit that was on the verge of departing from Iraq. Although she had bruises from her shoulders to her elbows and on her thighs, a chaplain told Neutzling she didn't "act like a rape victim," she says. Her commanders put a "letter of interest" in her file for committing adultery because one of the men was married. The perpetrators were not charged, her sergeant told her later, because it would have prevented their unit from returning to the United States.

*Air Force reservist Mary Gallagher faces having her military career cut short due to PTS from a sexual assault.*



*Andrea Neutzling's lifelong dream of an Army career was dashed as a consequence of two separate assaults.*



"I had wanted to be in the Army from the time I was in kindergarten," Neutzling says. "I'd like to see things change before my daughter gets old enough to join."

**The Challenge of Change.** Rebekah Havrilla is most struck by the pervasive harassment that persisted throughout her time in the service. She and other women who graduated from the rigorous Naval School Explosive Ordnance Disposal weren't admired for their skills. Instead, she says, the presumption was that "you provided sexual services to somebody" to get through it.

The harassment became especially unbearable during the last half of her yearlong deployment to Afghanistan, she says. She was the only female, and the lowest-ranking member, of a bomb-disposal team led by a man who she says openly groped her and peppered her with sexually inappropriate comments. Havrilla sought treatment as her anxiety level went through the roof and she started to lose sleep. She was diagnosed with PTS and put on antidepressants and sleeping pills. And then, she says, a colleague raped her.

Of all of that, however, the harassment haunts her the most. "While the rape was traumatic, it was not nearly as devastating to me as the things people did to me on a daily basis," she says.

Today, Havrilla deals with chronic depression and has difficulty sleeping. VA benefits haven't provided much relief. Most VA medical centers are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and jumping through the system's hoops is a full-time job, she says. That's hard to do if people work, as she does, or are raising children.

Havrilla has sought help on her own, and now works as a caseworker for SWAN. She's applied to graduate school and plans to earn her doctorate degree in clinical psychology. Along the way, she hopes to change the culture that has allowed military sexual harassment and assault to erode the lives of many veterans, male and female.

"I just want to help women who have been in this situation, and work to change the system," Havrilla says. "We can change this so it doesn't happen to anyone."



*Oregon Army National Guard veteran Jeff McDowell, who did a combat tour in Baghdad, sought help for his own PTS so he could help his soldiers, and other veterans, with theirs. With that goal in mind, he is now completing a master's program in counseling.*

post-traumatic stress disorder as a distinct diagnosis in 1980. Three years later, Congress mandated a government study on the prevalence of the condition. The National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study found that 15 percent of the war's male veterans had PTS, compared with 5 percent of the civilian population.

Fourteen years later, 1,400 Vietnam combat veterans who belonged to The American Legion participated in a follow-up study that showed that PTS had dropped only slightly over that time. "It was important to characterize the lifetime course of this condition – whether it would resolve, remain, or reappear periodically, to what degree, and in what form," Chapman says.

The Legion follow-up study also found that Vietnam veterans with PTS experienced higher rates of divorce, cardiovascular disease, fatigue and compromised immune systems. "The distinction between physical health and mental health is artificial," Chapman says.

While society and the medical community were coming to terms with PTS, small groups of Vietnam veterans began to meet in informal gathering spots, such as the empty room above the Flower and Dragon restaurant in San Francisco. At first, no one spoke. "They didn't have a word for what they were experiencing," Jones says. "They drew strength from each other. At least they knew they weren't alone."

That informal effort gave rise to the storefront Vet Centers – later adopted by VA – that would help Paca, Jones and many other Vietnam veterans manage the trauma that followed them home from war. "The tag line," Jones says, "was 'Help without Hassles.'"

**"You are freaked out until the next thing happens that freaks you out more."** Thirty years later, Oregon Army National Guard veteran Jeff McDowell turned to the Vet Center in Eugene, Ore., for help dealing with his brutal combat tour in Baghdad. His counselor, the son of a Vietnam

## How PTS, TBI can strain a marriage

Some days, Tammara Rosenleaf would rather not be a combat veteran's wife.

She loves her husband. He is kind, generous and unflappable – a contrast to her stronger, more emotional personality. But the Sean Hefflin she married 13 years ago didn't come back from Iraq. He can't remember the smallest task. He can't focus. He totaled her car and shattered her shoulder during one of the times he mentally checked out.

"Traumatic brain injury has a huge impact on our relationship," she says. "It's like being a mom with a 7-year-old."

Hefflin describes his 13-month Army deployment to Iraq with indifference. "I did a little bit of a lot of things. (Truck) gunner, support to division, escorting foreign nationals who came on base to work."

His camp in Baghdad was a favorite enemy target. "There were mortar rounds coming in daily," he says. "I don't necessarily believe my combat experience was that traumatic. Odds are better I would die in a car accident here."

Hefflin's grandfather died as he was coming home from Iraq. The night of the funeral, Rosenleaf realized that her husband had PTS. The couple was driving along a foggy,

winding road near Olympia, Wash., when an approaching car flashed lights to signal there were deer on the road. Hefflin grabbed her arm, then grabbed the steering wheel and yelled, "Don't slow down!" She barely kept the car from careening into the ditch. Her arm bore the bruise of her husband's grip.

Later, Hefflin freaked out when Rosenleaf pulled into a parking spot next to an empty Chinese takeout container he feared might contain a roadside bomb.

She insisted that he get help. He was treated by a former military psychologist near Fort Hood for 18 months.

As Hefflin's symptoms eased – he says the Army diagnosed adjustment disorder, not PTS – Rosenleaf started to see signs of TBI, especially after they left the structured military life at Fort Hood and returned to Helena. Hefflin loses to-do lists. He leaves the house to meet his wife for lunch and returns without ever arriving at the restaurant.

Nonetheless, he is extremely bright. "If there was a particular thing Napoleon said on the eve of whatever, Sean would know that," Rosenleaf says. "What he's supposed to do today? He can't remember."

One spring day while he was driving, "Sean was living in his sleep like he normally does." He threaded his way through cars at an intersection and into the path of an oncoming SUV. Rosenleaf, who was sitting in the passenger seat, went to the hospital with a shattered shoulder.

"There's no way I can continue living with a person who can't come back from wherever he's gone," Rosenleaf said after the accident. "I would give anything to get out from under being a combat veteran's wife ... I'm talking about leaving a really good man because he can't remember anything."

Somehow she always finds new resolve and goes on.

Her frustration is not simply about his memory. She works full time as a case manager for developmentally disabled clients and takes care of most things at home. It's exhausting. "He's starting to realize it has serious effects for me," Rosenleaf says.

VA is trying to determine what is causing Hefflin's attention problems. She recounts two incidents in Iraq that could have inflicted TBI. In one case, she and Hefflin were conversing online through instant messaging when a blast from a mortar round blew him out of his bunk.

Today, Hefflin remembers a hooch two doors down being blown apart but has no memory that the blast knocked him to the floor. Nor does he recall being hit in the head by a portable toilet upended in a different mortar attack.

A VA neuropsychologist pinpointed evidence of TBI in the left temporal lobe of Hefflin's brain in February, and a follow-up MRI was scheduled for July. VA has not yet decided if the brain injury is service-connected. Rosenleaf is less concerned with her husband's disability rating than she is with his prospects for regaining independence.

"I want him to be able to function," she says. "I lost part of my partner. The military owes me half of my partner back."



*Sean Hefflin and Tammara Rosenleaf struggle with the changes PTS and TBI have brought to their marriage.*


## Resources


### VA Veterans Crisis Line

 (800) 273-8255 (press 1)

 [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net)


### War Related Illness and Injury Study Center – Clinical Services


 (800) 722-8340

 [www.warrelatedillness.va.gov/warrelatedillness/clinical.asp](http://www.warrelatedillness.va.gov/warrelatedillness/clinical.asp)

 [wriisc.dc@va.gov](mailto:wriisc.dc@va.gov)


### National Center for PTSD

 (802) 296-6300


 [www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov)

 [ncptsd@va.gov](mailto:ncptsd@va.gov)

### VA PTSD Coach app (for smart phones)

 [www.ptsd.va.gov/public/pages/ptsdcoach.asp](http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/pages/ptsdcoach.asp)


### The American Legion – DSO Directory

 (202) 861-2700

 [www.legion.org/departments/officers](http://www.legion.org/departments/officers)


 [var@legion.org](mailto:var@legion.org)

### PTSD Foundation of America

 (877) 717-7873

 [ptsdusa.net](http://ptsdusa.net)


### National Veterans Legal Services Program


 (202) 265-8305

 [www.nvlsp.org](http://www.nvlsp.org)

 [info@nvlsp.org](mailto:info@nvlsp.org)

### Service Women's Action Network (SWAN) National Peer Support Helpline

 1-888-729-2089

 [www.servicewomen.org](http://www.servicewomen.org)

 [peersupport@servicewomen.org](mailto:peersupport@servicewomen.org)

veteran with severe PTS, quickly concluded that McDowell also had the condition.

McDowell's scout platoon conducted approximately 270 missions during its year in downtown Baghdad. That included investigating IED blasts and providing security for government ministries and hotels, as well as occasional forays into Baghdad neighborhoods. "We'd go to check something out, hear a big boom, and just keep going, mission to mission," says McDowell, who served as platoon sergeant during a 2004-2005 deployment.

Enemy identification was mind-bending for U.S. troops who patrolled Iraq, as it was for those who fought in Vietnam. Insurgents and civilians dressed alike. The rules of engagement changed rapidly. "You are freaked out until the next thing happens that freaks you out more," McDowell says. "Three-hundred and sixty-five days of that, and you fly back home."

Like Vietnam veterans, soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan often feel out of place when they try to return to civilian life, so they return to the military and re-enter the war. Job-hunting is arduous. Relationships can be impossible.

"We did an unofficial poll of 300 or 400 soldiers who went over with us," McDowell says. "We had an 86-percent divorce rate. I can count on two hands the number who don't have at least one divorce. Some had two, some three."

McDowell was 40 when he came home from his deployment. The transition was difficult. His contracting business had withered. He was short-fused with his wife and children. He no longer cared about hunting and fishing, which he had loved before his deployment. "I lost my joy," McDowell says. His wife encouraged him to get help, and he's parlayed that into a career helping others.

After retiring from the National Guard in 2007, McDowell entered a master's program in counseling to assist other veterans. "I started seeing some of my guys fall apart," he says. "I felt responsible for them. I thought, if I can figure some of this stuff out for myself, maybe I can figure it out for the other guys."

He's already seeing veterans as part of an unpaid internship with a private, nonprofit counseling group. He hopes to put his skills to work at the Eugene VA Vet Center.

McDowell made careful choices. He got counseling. He participated in a neuro-feedback treatment program. He also decided to never carry a weapon of any kind, knowing that he couldn't shut off his combat instincts.

"You start thinking about the things you did, the way you reacted, the training you got, and you know you are not the same person," McDowell says. "I spent a lot of time thinking about this ... about whether I was going to like this (new) person."

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- Dry, itchy skin
- Soap scum on sinks and appliances
- Hot water heater that heats up more and more slowly due to scale build-up?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you are the perfect candidate to try the ScaleRID Electronic Hard Water Treatment System in your home for the next 120 days.

If you don't get RID of your hard water problems, you will receive a complete refund.

But that won't happen because ScaleRID is the most advanced, effective electronic hard water treatment system you will find for such a low cost. It's also the easiest to install.

### Q. But how exactly does it work?

A. The ScaleRID, which is about 4" x 6" and weighs less than 3 pounds, treats hard water with a patented technology that induces variable electric fields with a continuously changing frequency. This field causes the dissolved minerals of calcium and magnesium to crystalize and remain in suspension, instead of adhering to the walls of piping, faucets or heating elements.

These minerals, now in suspension, flow with the water and are discharged down the drain (see diagram and our ScaleRID white paper at [www.scalelid.com](http://www.scalelid.com) for more details).

### Q. How is ScaleRID different from salt-based water softeners?

A. In a salt-based water softener, an ion exchange takes place and the hard ions in calcium and magnesium trade places with the soft ions from the salt poured into the tank periodically.

Water softeners must constantly regenerate to keep the ion exchange flowing and must have salt added at least monthly.

Most of the salt used for regeneration gets flushed out of the system and may be released into the soil or sewer. The process can be damaging to the environment, not to mention wasting 80-150 gallons of water a week and adding unhealthy salt to your water.

### Q. What makes ScaleRID so special compared to other electronic water treatment systems?

A. International Home Shopping (IHS) just completed a comprehensive upgrade of ScaleRID to make it 1) the easiest to install; with our new exclusive Quick Connect Coil you can have your ScaleRID up and running in about 10 minutes, 2) one of the most advanced; with our new computer chips to replace the integrated circuits, the ScaleRID is the most efficient device for its cost, 3) the least expensive; even with all our improvements we actually lowered our prices so that everyone with hard water problems can get RID of them simply, safely and inexpensively.

### Q. Without regeneration how will I know the ScaleRID is working?

A. You will get the most important benefit: you will not be bothered by hard water problems. Within the first week, you will see the elimination of new scale deposits and loosening of existing scale. Soap will lather easier; your skin will feel softer and your hair

cleaner and more manageable. Spots on dishes and glasses will be reduced. After 2 to 4 weeks, water will get hotter faster due to improved performance of your water heater. You will notice the reduced amounts of soap, shampoo, detergents and cleaners you need to use to get the jobs done. Cleaning of surfaces, especially chrome, baths and sinks will be easier. Your water pressure may improve without scale clogging your pipes.

### Q. This sounds too good to be true; does ScaleRID really work?

A. The science behind ScaleRID has been around for years. There are hundreds of thousands of units operating in 40 countries. But thanks to IHS, everyone can now utilize this science because ScaleRID is so easy to install, so efficient and effective and so reasonably priced.

### Q. What is the difference between the SR-1000 and the SR-2000?

Both have the exact same capability to rid your home of scale. The big difference is that the ScaleRID SR-1000 is for moderate to hard water and comes with one Quick Connect Coil. The ScaleRID SR-2000 is for very hard water or for homes/duplexes with large water usage and comes with two Quick Connect Coils.

You cannot afford not to try ScaleRID in your home for 120 days. If it's not for you, return it for a complete refund. YOU RISK NOTHING.

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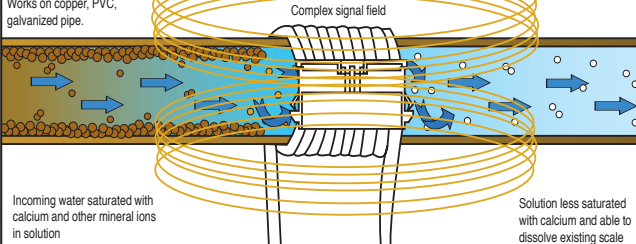


Pipe 4-5 weeks of ScaleRID use

## ScaleRID

### How It Works

Quick Connect Coil attaches in seconds around water pipe. Works on copper, PVC, galvanized pipe.



The system consists of the energizing unit and a Quick Connect Coil that simply snaps around the pipe of the incoming water supply.

ScaleRID's coil produces an electric field using a complex modulating frequency wave that produces an impulse which changes the electrical and physical properties of the scale-forming molecules. This causes the adhesive properties of the calcium carbonate crystals and other minerals to repel rather than adhere to pipes and fixtures. The crystals remain in suspension and just go down the drain. This action stops any further build-up of scale and, because the solubility of the water is increased, existing scale is taken back into the water and gradually removed.

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The ScaleRID has helped my plumbing tremendously. It has cleaned out the build-up on all my faucets. There is no more residue on my sink in my home and most importantly, not in my coffee pots. I am a very satisfied customer. *Mrs. Wagner, WY*

The product is very wonderful. There is no more build-up on my shower heads. They are no longer plugging up like they did in the past from all the years of build-up. I have only had the product for several months, however I am very satisfied with the results so far and can't wait to see what the future brings with this product. *Mr. Finch, WA*

Our water is much cleaner and we get more suds when we do laundry and dishes. Also, the unit was very easy to install. I would recommend this unit to many more friends since I already had 2 more people call in and order this product on my recommendation. *M. Sousoures, NV*

#### ScaleRID vs. Salt-Based Water Softener Comparison

	ScaleRID	Salt-Based Water Softener
Cost	under \$150	\$400 - \$1,800.00
Maintenance	none	constant maintenance
Softening Method	electrical field	salt-based ion exchange
Installation	10 minute do-it-yourself	professional
Scale Removal	YES	NO
Scale Prevention	YES	NO
Back Flush	NO	YES 80-100 gallons per week
Skin Test	makes skin softer	makes skin dry
Soap Test	soap suds wash away	soap suds difficult to remove
Health Benefits	leaves in essential minerals	exchanges minerals with sodium

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*"To an extent, I need David to stay trigger-ready."* Families struggle with their own stresses caring for loved ones with PTSD. "A lot of times, spouses become the sponges," Melissa Seligman says, "and have nowhere to release it." They often face their own secondary PTSD.

Seligman started convulsing when her husband described the carnage from that suicide bombing in the same flat, emotionless tone her father used to tell his story about the helicopter gunner losing a leg in Vietnam. David had the same startled reaction as her dad when Seligman touched him. And he exploded with anger for no apparent reason. It would be three years, including another combat deployment and a year at Officer Candidate School, before they could confront his PTSD.

Like most military spouses, Seligman was reluctant to seek help for herself, worried that she would be taking resources from people in greater need. Then she came across Ken Jones on Twitter, and started talking to him about her experiences with her husband and her father. Not only was Jones a Vietnam combat veteran, but he had grown up in the

shadow of his own father's World War II post-traumatic stress.

"For the first time, I had a translator," she says. "Ken Jones opened up the world for understanding both men."

Understanding David's triggers helps her to realize that his reactions aren't personal, to negotiate the difficult moments, and to foster his relationship with their children.

Soon, Seligman and Chris Piper – who together co-founded the "Her War, Her Voice" blog – were recording their conversations about combat stress and military families with Jones and posting them on the Internet. David Seligman decided to seek counseling after hearing just one of those conversations.

Even this victory comes with caution, a question about whether too much healing will dull the edge that keeps her husband alive. "To an extent, I need David to stay trigger-ready," Seligman says. "I need him to be numb to the horrors of war. Because without that numbness, he may make mistakes."

Inspired by his son-in-law and encouraged by his VA doctor, her father started getting help for his PTSD a year ago. Seligman is relieved that the most important men in her life are healing; she no longer shakes when they talk about the events they witnessed. Still, she wishes she had the power to reach into the past and find a way to end her father's nightmares.

"I always wanted him to be better," Seligman says. "As a wife and mother, it makes me wonder how I could have changed things if I had just asked him. I wonder who he would have been if someone had listened." 🌿

*Ken Olsen is a frequent contributor to The American Legion Magazine.*



*Melissa Seligman and her husband, David. Her blog and online conversations about the effects of PTSD on families spurred him to get counseling for the PTSD that was affecting their own marriage.*

## More on PTSD

Watch videos and read Web-exclusive articles online:

 [www.legion.org/magazine](http://www.legion.org/magazine)

## Coming next month: Part II

As cases of PTSD and TBI continue to multiply, alternative treatments for each condition are sought. *The American Legion Magazine* explores the use of hyperbaric oxygen chambers and other methods to treat both conditions.

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# HEROES and HORSES

*Into the Mountains of Montana*

**BY MARK SEAVEY AND IAN DePLANQUE  
PHOTOS BY RENEE DANIELS-MANTLE**



**W**

inston Churchill once said, "There is something about the outside of a horse that is good for the inside of a man." Just outside Three Forks, Mont., a group of cowboys has made it a point to prove that to a bunch of young combat veterans, including us.

Heroes and Horses is an intensive seven-day program that teaches veterans horse-handling, riding and outdoorsmanship, concluding with a backcountry pack trip into the Rocky Mountains.

Supported and facilitated by Soldiers' Angels, a nonprofit organization based in San Antonio, Heroes and Horses gives Iraq and Afghanistan veterans the opportunity to heal their wounds alongside their fellow soldiers, while experiencing the West's rugged beauty. Paired with equine partners, the veterans immerse themselves in a "ranch week" that equips them for extended trips into the mountains and a chance to put their new skills to the test.

The project's name was chosen to evoke the spirit of courage and passion that lies in all of us, and to focus on the powerful bond between man and horse. Heroes and Horses proves Churchill's theory, as do a number of studies and programs that substantiate the belief that horses can have an amazing influence on humans and human behavior.

Our inaugural trip into the mountains had us (we are both Operation Enduring Freedom

combat veterans) joining three cowboys and five of our brothers in arms in the Wall Creek region of southwestern Montana, near Yellowstone Park. "Mongo" and Ryan served together in the 173rd Infantry, where both were wounded at the Battle of Wanat in Afghanistan. Mike, a Marine, saw heavy combat in Iraq. Rounding out our group were Bob and Matt, two Navy SEALs with roughly 40 years of service combined. Within a day, we were laughing and joking as if we'd known each other all our lives. That's just the way it is with servicemembers, especially when you're in an environment where you can be yourself.

The program's base of operations is Mantle Ranch in Trident, Mont., run by Kail Mantle and Renee Daniels-Mantle, our guides and hosts for the week. Kail and Renee are the embodiment of the West, rugged individualists with a passion for the land they call home.

Mark White, one of Kail's neighbors, served as our other cowboy guide. He lost a leg in an accident on a power line some 30 years ago, after

**Learn more about how OIF/OEF veterans can find solace in the Rocky Mountains:**

 [www.heroesandhorses.net](http://www.heroesandhorses.net)

which he chose the questionably safer occupation of backcountry outfitter. He looks every inch the cowboy he is, sort of a cross between Yukon Cornelius and the manager of the baseball team in the movie “Major League.” When one of us started hurting, it only took one look at Mark to “cowboy up.” Pushing 60 with a leg that frequently bleeds around his prostheses, Mark never travels anywhere without an infectious smile. (He was even smiling when his foot accidentally got hooked while fishing.)

A young stable hand named Brett rounded out the cowboys, while Renee, Mark’s wife Jean, and Mantle employee Rosalee pitched in by cooking our meals while we trained. The food was amazing, and our plan to shed some pounds during our journey into the woods was immediately derailed.

We spent the first day getting to know each other, and the second getting to know our horses, Sundancer and Stretch. They were selected with us in mind, since they are unusually placid animals that wouldn’t be overburdened by our bulk.

## Veterans on the Lake offers wilderness retreat

Another option for veterans wishing to enjoy the peace and healing of the great outdoors is the Veterans on the Lake Resort in Minnesota’s Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, near Ely. You can swim, boat and fish on Fall Lake, hike in the woods surrounding the resort, and participate in dozens of family-friendly activities. The nonprofit resort is dedicated to providing for wounded or disabled veterans. The lodge, docks, pool, grounds and cabins were built to accommodate the disabled.

In addition, the Ely area has many unique attractions, including the North American Bear Center, the International Wolf Center, and the Dorothy Molter Museum. One of Ely’s most famous residents, Molter was known as “Knife Lake Dorothy” or the “Root Beer Lady,” as she made root beer and sold it to thousands of passing canoeists (including a young Julia Roberts) from her cabin, located 15 miles and several portages from the nearest road.

There’s also the Ely-Winton History Museum, which illustrates the local history of logging and mining through artifacts, photographs

and displays. For an even more adventurous look at mining, the Soudan Underground Mine is located 15 miles south of Ely. Visitors don helmets and travel 2,341 feet down in a “cage.” Hundreds of feet beneath the earth’s surface, the transportation shifts to a railcar for a ride back into the cavern as you listen to stories of the mining days.

The resort’s primary draw, though, is the opportunity to land one of Fall Lake’s monstrous walleyes. You can rent everything you will need at the resort, from fishing poles and bait to one of the many motorboats, canoes or pontoon boats available just steps from your private cabin. Or, if you prefer to stay on land, the resort offers three campfire rings, a heated pool, a sandy beach, a tennis court, a horseshoe pit and even a Finnish sauna.

The resort receives support from The American Legion Department of Minnesota.

**For more on the Veterans on the Lake Resort and its opportunities for servicemembers, veterans and their families:**

 [www.veteransonthelakeresort.com](http://www.veteransonthelakeresort.com)



Caroline Seavey

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Bob was the real horseman among the veterans, and he got a huge roan to match his skills. Before heading out, we went through an obstacle course set up to mirror some of what we'd face on the trail: water crossings, low thickets, even some inclines.

On the third day, we learned how to properly load the horses. Mark and Kail had some good-natured disagreement on how much equipment to take into the mountains. There was the "Cowboys don't need all that (stuff)" side, countered with "Why sleep cold on the ground when we have cots, stoves, and big horses to carry them?" The latter argument won out, and our nine horses carried all the essentials we would need or could want.

Heading into the Rockies is the purpose of this program – getting war veterans into the wild, to find peace and tranquility. We cannot overstate just how much this worked for us. When we arrived, Kail told us, "This is about giving you a taste of the freedom you fought for."

For two nights, our home was a small meadow just west of Cameron, Mont., along a bend in Wall Creek. It was idyllic, bordered on all sides by snow-covered mountains and tall trees. On one of our daily outings, we found an elk head, which Mark brought back with him. We spent the days fishing or riding. The nights were spent drinking cold beer by the fire, telling stories and laughing.

The time went by too fast. Before we knew it, it was time to go home, give up our bed rolls and



horses, get back to our jobs, reunite with our families, and face the daily routine we had so eagerly shed.

On the first night, around the fire, Kail sang one of many songs he's written, called "Old Road." The lyrics make clear why combat veterans like us enjoy programs like this:

*I heard the old West was dead and gone / Civilization has taken its toll / Well, I think you're wrong, it's neither dead nor gone / You just can't see it from the road*

If you find yourself in Three Forks in late April, look for the Mantles and a few hundred horses to go running by. That's the real West. That's America. And if you find yourself there any other time of year, do what Kail says and get away from the road. You have our promise that the old West is alive and well, and we are too, more than ever before, having tasted freedom in its purest form. 🌿

*Mark Seavey is new media manager for The American Legion Magazine Division.*

*Ian DePlanque is deputy director of The American Legion Legislative Division.*

*Both are military bloggers.*

**Read more about Heroes and Horses at the Legion's Burn Pit blog site:**

**🌐 [www.burnpit.us](http://www.burnpit.us)**



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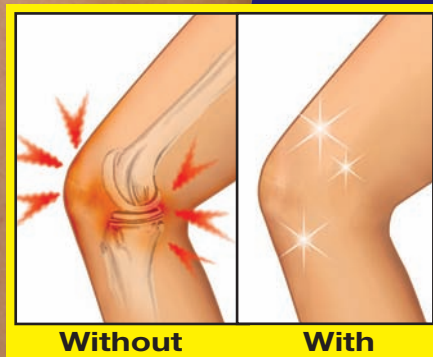
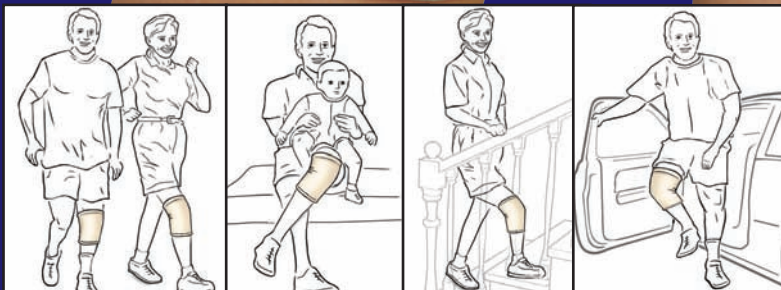
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# ROAR

## survey reveals claims frustration

*Poor communication, lost paperwork among veterans' problems with VA.*

Results of an online survey conducted last winter by The American Legion reveal just how frustrated veterans are with backlog-choked VA regional offices across the country. Of the 2,145 people who responded, 96 percent were veterans, 2 percent spouses, and the remainder dependents, caregivers or others.

The survey was conducted to establish a foundation of understanding before the Legion's Regional Office Action Review (ROAR) teams began visiting the offices to identify the problems and what might be done to correct them. VA has been mired in a backlog of unresolved benefits claims for years. It is now believed to be at nearly 1 million, and growing.

According to a report documenting the results of the survey, 85 percent of respondents described the overall performance of the regional offices as "inefficient and untimely." Only 6 percent said their claims were adjudicated in 120 days or less, a standard VA Secretary Eric Shinseki has set as a goal for the department.

Fifty-seven percent of survey respondents reported a processing time of one year or longer.

According to the ROAR report, "survey respondents expressed an understanding that there is a large volume of claims for VA to process, and it will take some time." However, respondents also expressed frustration about VA's failure to communicate clearly about the status of claims. While 50 percent indicated that professional courtesy at regional offices was at least adequate, 31 percent were dissatisfied about the way they were treated.

Another problem: lost paperwork. "A large percentage of respondents indicated that paper evidence they submitted had been lost even after certified arrival at the regional office," the report states. "A small percentage complained that their entire claims file had been lost."

Convenient access to VA regional-office support was specifically addressed. A common problem reported is the practice of making veterans go out of their way for compensation and pension examinations, often "hundreds of miles away from their

homes, when there (is) an equipped facility within 25 miles." Sixty-six percent of respondents reported difficulty accessing their regional offices at all.

Veterans also reported "extreme frustration" with VA's lack of flexibility, short notice of appointment openings, and staff politeness at compensation and pension exams.

In terms of claims-processing quality, 65 percent said they were not treated fairly by adjudicators, and 54 percent said they intended to appeal VA's decisions. "Claimants didn't feel that all evidence in the file was reviewed before a decision was made on the claim," the report states.

**57%** of survey respondents reported a processing time of one year or longer

Seventy percent said they would like to see VA hire more veterans to reduce the backlog and improve performance, and some suggested other strategies to improve regional offices, including:

- Institute a "call-back" system to reduce the amount of time veterans have to wait on the phone, on hold, with VA's call center.
- Convert the claims-adjudication process to an electronic system.
- Allow veterans to review C&P examination results before adjudication, to correct omissions.
- Expedite all pension claims, because they are income-based and "it should be assumed that all applicants are experiencing financial hardship."

The Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division launched the ROAR program last spring to strengthen its understanding of the claims backlog, and to help VA set priorities to begin reversing it. Through June, the Legion conducted site visits at six regional offices, to discuss issues reported in the online survey and work out solutions.

The VA&R Division is sharing the results of the survey with VA Central Office. 🌿

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In a time in which challenges abound, we should all take heart and pride in these strengths of the American people and the impressive way they are displayed in America's men and women in uniform."

## David H. Petraeus

Director, Central Intelligence Agency

Following 9/11, Petraeus commanded the 101st Airborne Division during the drive to Baghdad, oversaw the security transition and co-authored the Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Manual. In 2007, Petraeus returned to Iraq to command U.S. and coalition forces, carrying out the Bush administration's "surge" strategy. He headed CENTCOM from October 2008 to July 2010, when he assumed command of U.S. forces and the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. President Obama recently selected him to lead the CIA.

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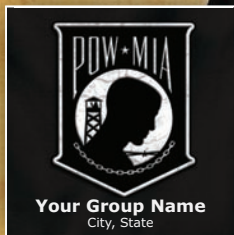
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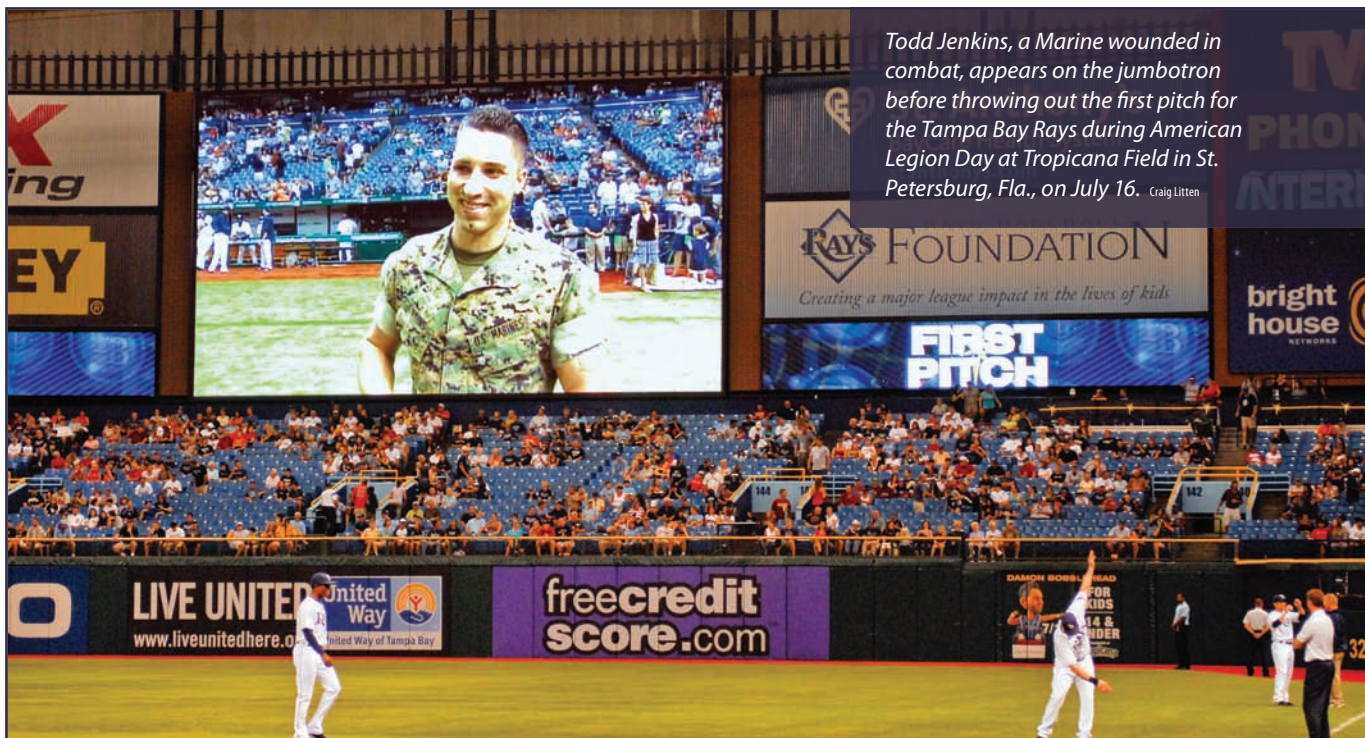
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*Todd Jenkins, a Marine wounded in combat, appears on the jumbotron before throwing out the first pitch for the Tampa Bay Rays during American Legion Day at Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, Fla., on July 16. Craig Litten*

[HEROES TO HOMETOWNS]

## Florida's Post 14 goes to bat for returning vets

BY ANDY ROMEY

Heroes to Hometowns (H2H) is an American Legion program that's still trying to gain traction nationally. But it's flourishing in the Tampa Bay area of Florida.

There, dedicated Legionnaires – many of them from Post 14 in St. Petersburg – are doing all they can to ensure that local veterans have a smooth transition to civilian life after they separate from the military, the very purpose of H2H.

As local district H2H coordinator Chris McCabe has found, a returning servicemember's needs are big and small. He's arranged award ceremonies for severely injured troops who returned home without ever properly receiving their service medals. He's helped other young 20-somethings fresh from combat find employment, and even lined up trips to Disney World for them.

An H2H event "could be something as simple as a welcome-home celebration," McCabe says. "It could be an awards ceremony, or it could be finding someone a job. I can pave the way a little bit for a veteran to go in for a job interview. I can tell the (human relations) officer from a company that I'm with The American Legion's Heroes to Hometowns program, and we're trying to help a severely wounded vet. That might get them an interview they wouldn't have gotten."

For three years, McCabe and other Post 14 Legionnaires have done their best to cater to the needs of returning veterans not just locally, but throughout Florida. Their plans for the future, however, are much more grand.

Their desire to help others can be traced to the day McCabe and Post 14 Commander Jerry Meekins met a young female veteran who was living in her car. The Legion's traditional channels for monetary aid weren't open to her, and she wasn't eligible for Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) because she didn't have children. She didn't even have an address, so mailing a check to her wasn't possible.

McCabe and Meekins came up with a solution: start a fund, administered by Post 14, to provide direct, on-the-spot financial assistance to any displaced veteran who needs it. Meekins says he wants to be able to walk to his office in the back of the post building anytime and cut a check with a veteran's name on it.

"There's no reason it should take 10 days, two weeks, to get a check to somebody in dire need," Meekins says. "Someone comes to me and says they need \$700. We're going to write them a check for \$700, whether you're single, young, old or without children."

The post's fund has been growing for some time. A big source of revenue comes from the annual American Legion Day at nearby Tropicana Field. Every summer, Post 14 brings veterans from local VA hospitals to a Tampa Bay Rays game, and the Department of Florida's H2H program gets a portion of the money for each ticket sold. Legionnaires also staff a merchandise kiosk at the stadium, which adds to the proceeds.

This year's American Legion Day, on July 16, saw the Rays host the Boston Red Sox.

Dan Newhart, the Rays' group-sales account executive, says any Legion post or department can set up a similar event with its local Major League Baseball team. It's just a matter of reaching out to them.

"We're all friends," Newhart says. "We're all looking for the next big idea, the next big event, the next big thing to do."

National Headquarters encourages posts and departments to pursue these relationships with pro-baseball franchises. In addition, each department chairman for American Legion Baseball has received a memo outlining Post 14's accomplishments with the Rays and how the relationship began.

"The program Chris (McCabe) put together is very simple and very effective," says Larry Price, Legion Baseball chairman. "We believe it is a terrific way to help promote our organization, the baseball program and the H2H program. It helps Legionnaires network with professional sports administrators and professional ballplayers. It also allows teams and individual players to get involved with a worthy project. We hope more posts and more American Legion baseball teams will follow the lead of Post 14."

Nationally televised baseball games aside, Post 14 hasn't forsaken traditional fundraisers to support its H2H fund. In March, it hosted a prime-rib and shrimp-scampi dinner that brought in around \$4,000. Local companies donated food, and a group of wounded warriors sat at the front of the post's banquet room as guests of honor.

Add it all up, and McCabe and Meekins hope their work amounts to something great. Ultimately, they want to purchase a foreclosed home from a bank, and convert it into a residential center for veterans who need housing or a place to stay while they receive outpatient treatment at a nearby VA hospital.

"The goal is to have our own house ready for people, similar to a Fisher House, or it could be for the wounded veteran while he is undergoing some treatments," McCabe says. "If he doesn't have to be in inpatient care, but he doesn't actually live here near the hospital, maybe we could ease some of the financial burdens for him."

Seeing the project through is a personal mission for Meekins, a Vietnam War veteran.

"When I came back from Vietnam, it was a whole different world," he says. "They hated us, they cursed at us. We're trying to make sure these kids are welcomed, deservedly so."

*Andy Romey is assistant web editor for The American Legion.*

Visit Heroes to Hometowns (H2H) online:

 [www.legion.org/heroes](http://www.legion.org/heroes)

[VERBATIM]

**"Each and every piece of steel, each and every artifact, is evidence of a crime ... the crime that existed and took place on Sept. 11, 2001. We want to make sure the steel is going to be open to the public. It has to be done in a dignified, open manner that people for generations will be able to see it."**

**Bill Baroni**, executive deputy director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, on the approval of nearly 1,083 requests for remnants of the World Trade Center to be given to cities, colleges and fire departments for 9/11 memorials

**"Out here, there is no male gender and no female gender. Our gender is soldier."**

**Army Staff Sgt. Vincent Vetterkind**,

Third Platoon, 164th Military Police, on the changing role of women in the military.

On June 4, one of Vetterkind's fellow platoon members, Spc. Devin Snyder, was killed by a roadside bomb. She is the 28th female U.S. soldier to die in Afghanistan.

**"You need to be doing stuff. That's my philosophy."**

**Tyrone Curry**, a Vietnam War

Navy veteran and janitor at Evergreen High School in Washington state, who won \$3.4 million in the lottery five years ago. Curry stayed on as custodian and track coach, and recently paid \$40,000 to build a new track for the school.



Media Bakery

**"If the U.S. could reduce its military spending a bit and spend more on improving the livelihood of the American people ... wouldn't that be a better scenario?"**

**Chen Bingde**, China's top general, in a joint news conference with visiting counterpart Adm. Mike Mullen on July 11

**"History should be honest."**

**California Gov. Jerry Brown**, signing a bill that would require the state's school textbooks to acknowledge the contributions of gay, lesbian and transgender Americans.

The law also requires that public schools teach about the contributions of Pacific Islanders and the disabled.

Sources: FoxNews.com, The New York Times, TODAY.com, AP, MSNBC.com



Tom Stratman

[DEFENSE]

## Gates: DoD 'must be part of solution'

In one of his last addresses as defense secretary, Robert Gates offered a hard-nosed, tell-it-like-it-is assessment of the United States and its military. His thoughtful words should give every American pause:

"The United States faces a serious fiscal predicament that could turn into a crisis – of credit, of confidence, of our position in the world – if not addressed soon ... I have long believed – and I still do – that the defense budget, however large it may be, is not the cause of this country's fiscal woes. However, as (a) matter of simple arithmetic and political reality, the Department of Defense must be at least part of the solution ... When President Eisenhower warned of the military-industrial complex in 1961, defense consumed more than half the federal budget, and the portion of the nation's economic output devoted to the military was about 9 percent. By comparison, this year's base defense budget of \$530 billion – the highest since World War II, adjusted for inflation – represents less than 15 percent of all federal spending and equates to roughly 3 and a half percent of GDP – a number that climbs to about 4 and a half percent when the war costs in Iraq and Afghanistan are included ...

"The current inventory is getting old and worn down from Iraq and Afghanistan. Some equipment can be refurbished with life-extension programs, but there is no getting around

the fact that others must be replaced ... We must build a new tanker. The ones we have are twice as old as many of the pilots flying them. We must field a next-generation strike fighter – the F-35 – and at a cost that permits large enough numbers to replace the current fighter inventory and maintain a healthy margin of superiority over the Russians and Chinese. We must build more ships – in recent years, the size of the Navy fleet has sunk to the lowest number since before World War II, and will get smaller as more Reagan-era vessels reach the end of their service life. We must recapitalize the ground forces – the Army and Marines – whose combat vehicles and helicopters are worn down after a decade of war. And at some point we must replace our ballistic missile submarines ...

"If we are going to reduce the resources and the size of the U.S. military, people need to make conscious choices about what the implications are for the security of the country, as well as for the variety of military operations we have around the world, if lower-priority missions are scaled back or eliminated ... The tough choices ahead are really about the kind of role the American people – accustomed to unquestioned military dominance for the past two decades – want their country to play in the world."

Read Gates' full speech online:

 [www.defense.gov/speeches](http://www.defense.gov/speeches)

[WAR ON TERROR]



## Nations give thumbs-up to SEAL Team Six

An Ipsos poll of 17,000 people in 22 countries reveals overwhelming support for the U.S. strike on Osama bin Laden. All told, 75 percent of those polled said the United States was justified in eliminating the terror mastermind. Among the survey's findings:

**United States, 95 percent**

**India, 95 percent**

**France, 87 percent**

**Britain, 87 percent**

**Australia, 85 percent**

**Belgium, 85 percent**

**Canada, 85 percent**

**Poland, 83 percent**

**Italy, 81 percent**

**Hungary, 79 percent**

**Brazil, 77 percent**

**Germany, 76 percent**

**South Africa, 76 percent**

**Russia, 75 percent**

**Sweden, 71 percent**

**Turkey, 71 percent**

**Spain, 70 percent**

**Mexico, 67 percent**

**South Korea, 63 percent**

**Japan, 63 percent**

**Indonesia, 54 percent**

**Argentina, 45 percent**

No Middle Eastern countries were surveyed.

"What is especially surprising is that majorities in nearly every country believe that the United States was justified in its actions," Darrell Bricker, chief executive officer of Ipsos Global Public Affairs, told Reuters.

[STATEMENT]

*"Whether it's a noncombat death or a suicide, then is not the time to examine the cause of death. There is little or no chance that these men and women would have died under similar circumstances had they not put themselves in service to their country. No matter where the servicemember dies or the cause of death, we feel that a condolence letter from the president of the United States – the commander in chief of our armed forces – is the very least our country can do for these families to show its gratitude."*

American Legion National Commander Jimmie Foster, on the White House's decision to send letters to the next of kin of any servicemembers – including those who commit suicide – killed while serving on active duty in combat operations. The new policy went into effect July 5. Foster added that post-traumatic stress is "one of the signature wounds of the war on terror, and one of the symptoms of PTS is suicidal thoughts. Those deaths shouldn't be marginalized in any way, and we are pleased those families will now receive the acknowledgement of their sacrifice that they deserve."



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U.S. Air Force

[WAR ON TERROR]

## UAVs vs. AQAP

The CIA is building an air base in the Middle East to launch armed UAVs against terror cells in Yemen, *The New York Times* reports. Although plans for the base were leaked to the *Times*, the whereabouts of the base remain unknown.

News of the secret base comes as Yemen teeters on the edge of civil war, and as the United States expands operations in the broken country. The U.S. military has used conventional manned warplanes and UAVs in recent months to target Yemen's branch of al-Qaida, dubbed al-Qaida in the Arab Peninsula, or "AQAP."

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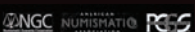
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[LEGISLATION]

## Legion wants earliest Navy commandos brought home

BY PHILIP M. CALLAGHAN

On May 26, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1497, a bill calling for the repatriation from Libya of the nation's first 13 Navy commandos.

They died on Sept. 4, 1804, in the harbor of Tripoli when an explosive-packed ship they crewed, the *Intrepid*, blew up prematurely and killed all 13 men on board. They were led by Master Commandant Richard Somers and his second-in-command, Lt. Henry Wadsworth (uncle of the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow).

The sailors' remains were discovered onshore the next day, abused by the enemy, and partially devoured by a pack of stray dogs before Capt. William Bainbridge and other Navy prisoners in Tripoli were allowed to bury Somers and his men.

More than 200 years later, those American heroes still lie buried in a hostile land.

In May, The American Legion's National Executive Committee passed a resolution urging the president and Congress "to support legislation and policies that will use all reasonable resources to achieve the fullest possible accounting of all missing American servicemembers, regardless of location or era of loss."

Tim Tetz, director of the Legion's Legislative Division, wrote a letter to House Speaker John Boehner asking for his support of H.R. 1497, co-authored by Reps. Mike Rogers of Michigan and Frank LoBiondo of New Jersey.

"There, within a forgotten cemetery, lie the remains of an American naval hero, Master Commandant Richard Somers, whose legacy inspires those still serving in the Navy," Tetz wrote. "There lie remains that family members have pled to have returned to the United States. It is therefore the opportunity and, more importantly, duty of Congress to direct that we recover the remains of those Americans within Tripoli. The time has come to bring our heroes home."

Michael Caputo, a member of American Legion Post 362 in East Aurora, N.Y., has been lobbying to bring the *Intrepid* crew's remains back to America. "They aren't lying in a Normandy-style hallowed ground," he says. "Some are in a ratty, unkempt cemetery, and others lie jumbled together underneath Green Square," where Col. Moammar Gadhafi and his government conduct public rallies.

"These men didn't get an honorable burial. They were dragged through the streets, fed to wild dogs and dumped in mass graves," Caputo adds. "But the most important reason to bring them back is because their families have wanted them home for more than 200 years."

Jack Glasser, mayor of Somers Point, N.J. – founded by the naval hero's ancestors – is part of an ongoing local effort to retrieve the remains of the *Intrepid* crew. "For the life of me, I cannot understand why we've left them there for 206 years," says Glasser, who retired from the New Jersey Air National Guard after 20 years. "It's time to bring them home."

Six U.S. Navy ships have been named for Somers, and a monument honoring him and his crew stands at the U.S. Naval Academy.



An engraving depicts the destruction of *Intrepid* on Sept. 4, 1804. Although the explosion's cause was unknown, naval officials believed Tripolines boarded the booby-trapped vessel and the crew blew it up, preferring death to capture.

Sally Hastings, president of the Somers Point Historical Society and Museum, says historical documents indicate that Somers' family tried to reclaim his remains in the early 1800s.

"Two centuries later, the story of Richard Somers and the crew of the *Intrepid* is not complete," Hastings says. "There is more to come. Ultimately, the Somers Point Historical Society will be the organization that plans any local burial of Richard Somers, with the assistance of the city and – I would hope – veterans groups."

Hastings and her organization have led the way by raising funds for a monument to Somers, and planning a ceremony for its eventual dedication at Somers Point.

"Any servicemember killed in the line of duty deserves to come home," says Barry Searle, director of the Legion's National Security/Foreign Relations Division. "First, it is important for family members to have their loved ones properly buried in an environment that isn't hostile."

"But bringing Somers and his men back home is also a matter of national honor and trust. By making this effort, we are telling future generations that the United States stands by its commitment to those who serve in uniform."

*Philip M. Callaghan is media marketing director for The American Legion.*

Watch a mini-documentary about the *Intrepid*:

 [www.legion.org/legiontv](http://www.legion.org/legiontv)

Support efforts to repatriate the remains of Somers and the *Intrepid* crew:

 [www.theintrepid13.org](http://www.theintrepid13.org)

Read more about Somers and the *Intrepid*'s mission:

 [www.intrepidproject.org](http://www.intrepidproject.org)

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## [MEDAL OF HONOR]

*"He's bleeding badly, but he summons the strength to lead the other Ranger to cover, behind a chicken coop. He radios for support. He hurls a grenade at the enemy, giving cover to a third Ranger who rushes to their aid. An enemy grenade explodes nearby, wounding Leroy's two comrades. And then a second grenade lands – this time, only a few feet away.*

*"Every human impulse would tell someone to turn away. Every soldier is trained to seek cover. That's what Sgt. Leroy Petry could have done. Instead, this wounded Ranger, this 28-year-old man with his whole life ahead of him, this husband and father of four, did something extraordinary. He lunged forward, toward the live grenade. He picked it up. He cocked his arm to throw it back.*

*"What compels such courage? What leads a person to risk everything so that others might live?"*

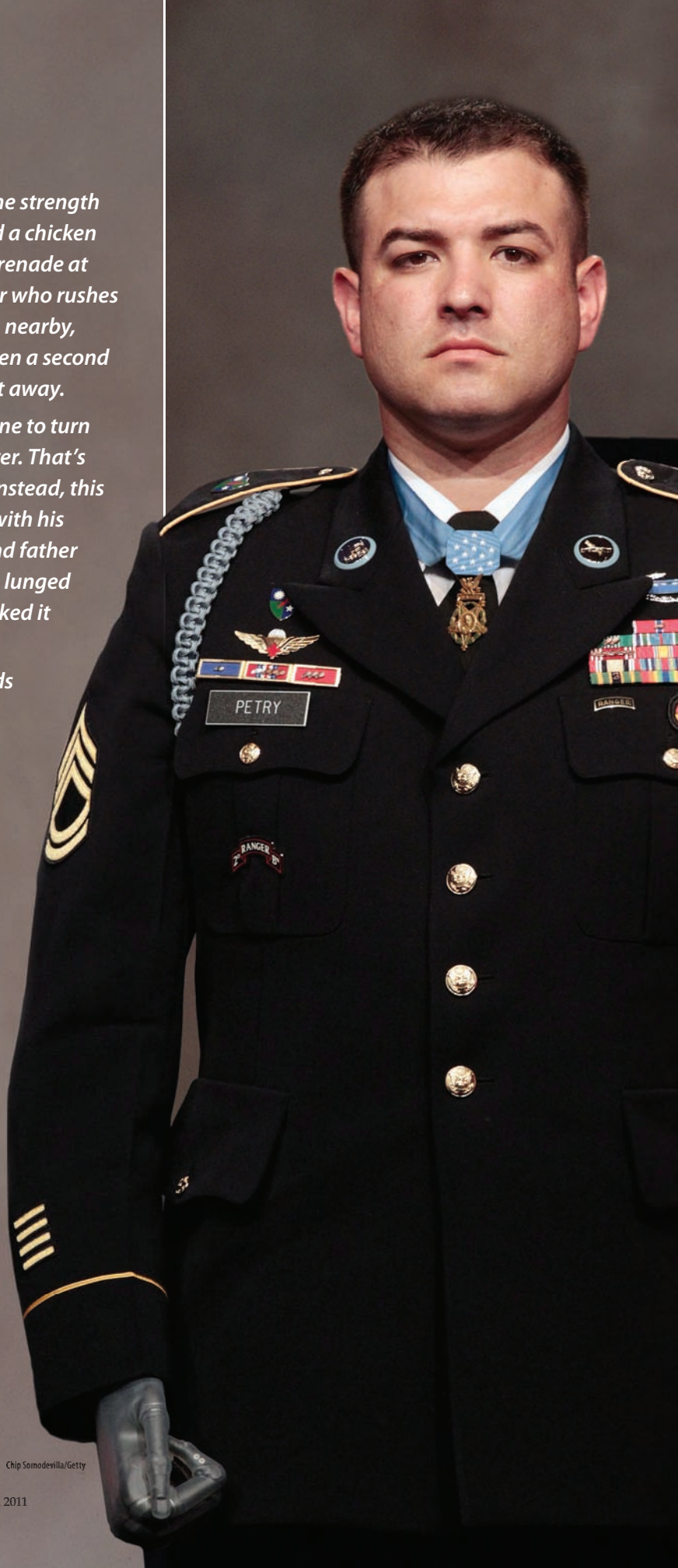
President Barack Obama, presenting the Medal of Honor to Army Sgt. 1st Class Leroy A. Petry on July 12

Petry is the second living recipient of the Medal of Honor from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the ninth servicemember from those wars to receive the nation's highest award for valor. Like Staff Sgt. Salvatore Giunta, who received the Medal of Honor last year, Petry was honored for heroic actions while serving in Afghanistan.

On May 26, 2008, Petry and his fellow Rangers conducted a daylight raid on a Taliban compound in the Paktia province. When he and Pfc. Lucas Robinson came under fire, Sgt. Daniel Higgins came to their aid. A grenade wounded Robinson and Higgins, and when a second grenade landed nearby, Petry – already shot – tried to throw it away. The grenade exploded in his right hand. Even so, he managed to put a tourniquet on his arm and radio in a report.

"To be singled out is very humbling," Petry told ABC News. "I consider every one of our men and women in uniform serving here and abroad to be our heroes. Whenever you have a chance or opportunity to thank them, shake their hand, give them a pat on the back ... that's the greatest reward that any servicemember can get, just a simple 'thank you.'"

Chip Somodevilla/Getty



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If you experience painful and annoying muscle cramps in your legs, calves, feet, or toes, especially at night, you should know relief is available. About 1 in 3 people are affected by nocturnal leg cramps and are putting up with loss of sleep because they are not aware of this proven treatment.

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tongue and contain eight active ingredients, such as magnesia phosphorica, which reduces cramps and radiating pains that are worse at night.

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## Fibromyalgia Pain and Fatigue?

If you suffer from aches and pains all over, have difficulty sleeping, and have the feeling of little or no energy, you may be one of the six million Americans who suffer from Fibromyalgia. These pains can be in the neck, shoulders, back, arms, and legs and can be accompanied by muscle tenderness and soreness. Many people are living in pain because they are not aware of this new proven treatment.

MagniLife® Fibromyalgia Relief relieves the everyday pain by using ingredients such as Conium that trigger reactions from the body to effectively relieve symptoms when nothing else has worked. The tablets dissolve under the tongue and can be taken safely along with other medications with no side effects. *"Fibromyalgia Relief*

*tablets have worked like a miracle. I have tried all other sorts of medications. I've been taking them less than two weeks, and my fingers and hands aren't stiff anymore. Whatever is in them works beautifully!"* - Helen D., Alabama.

MagniLife® Fibromyalgia Relief is so successful it is **available at Rite Aid Pharmacies**. It can also be ordered for \$19.99 (plus \$5.95 S&H) for 125 tablets per bottle. Save when you order two bottles for \$39.98 (plus \$9.95 S&H) and receive a third bottle **FREE**. Send your name and address with payment to: MagniLife, Dept. FAL-4, P.O. Box 6789, McKinney, TX 75071 or call 1-800-730-4173. Satisfaction guaranteed or return the bottles within 90 days for a full refund. Order now at [www.MagniLife.com](http://www.MagniLife.com).

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## [ECONOMIC]

## Legion endorses job packages for veterans

In testimony submitted to the House Veterans Affairs Committee on July 15, Bob Madden, assistant director of the Legion's Economic Division, applauded the committee for giving increased attention to the troubling rise in veteran unemployment. The committee's slate of legislation "addresses many of the key concerns of our 2.4 million members," he wrote.

Chief among the bills is the Veteran Opportunity to Work (VOW) Act of 2011, H.R. 2433, which provides "retraining assistance" for veterans 35 to 60 years old who are not eligible for benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. It extends to older veterans the opportunity to pursue a post-service education at a community college or technical school that leads to an associate's degree or certificate.

Madden said that VOW acknowledges "one of the little-known facts of veterans unemployment: though the percentage of younger, unemployed veterans is slightly higher, the vast majority of unemployed veterans are of an older age group, and require retraining of job skills not necessarily covered by education benefits directed at younger veterans. Reaching these veterans would provide real and tangible help."

VOW also authorizes VA and DoL to complete a study of 10 military occupational specialties in an effort to reduce barriers to certification and licensure for transitioning military members, to promote credentialing, and to "identify best practices that can be leveraged by all services to increase the transferability of military education, training, experience and skills."

VOW, along with companion bill H.R. 1941, the Hiring Heroes Act of 2011, strengthens DoD's Transition Assistance Program (TAP), which assists military personnel and their families with job counseling and related services. TAP is a voluntary program at major military installations, but proposed legislation would make participation mandatory.

A third bill would improve veteran access to employment, education and transition information by directing VA to better publicize its VetSuccess website. For years, unemployment among veterans has been significantly greater than the overall jobless rate. In 2010, the unemployment rate for 9/11-era veterans averaged 11.5 percent, compared to 9.4 percent for non-veterans. Veterans 18 to 24 were even worse off, with more than one in five unemployed.



## [MEMBERSHIP]

## Online renewals off to great start

Some 2,500 transactions a day have been handled since July 1, when The American Legion began offering online membership renewal. The Legion's Information Technology Division reports that more than 25,000 Legionnaires renewed online within the first 10 days of the service.

"The high volume of online renewals shows us many things," National Commander Jimmie L. Foster said. "Foremost, there is tremendous market demand for fast, convenient online membership services. Second, it shows that our members are paying close attention to notices posted in the organization's media, and acting upon them. This early wave of online renewals came before most printed renewal notices even reached member mailboxes. It is highly likely the biggest portion of those who renewed online learned about the new service on the Internet, as well."

Online renewal was tested in the departments of Illinois, Arizona, Wisconsin, Georgia and Maryland. Over the testing period, the numbers got progressively better.

The National Executive Committee approved the change allowing online renewals to the Legion's constitution at the 92nd National Convention in Milwaukee, after a recommendation from the National Executive Committee. Veterans could already join the Legion online.

"It is important to remember that online renewal is a choice, not a mandate," Foster said. "Judging from the number of online renewals so far, the membership seems to like to have that as an option to mailed renewals. More and more, people want to conduct business online, and the Legion is working to provide that convenience while at the same time ensuring the highest standards of security."

**Renew your membership online, and watch videos explaining how the process works for posts and departments:**

 [www.legion.org/renew](http://www.legion.org/renew)

## [MEMBERSHIP]

### NEW POSTS

**Prince of Wales Post 26, Craig, Alaska** Chartered July 14 (18 members)

**Jeffery S. Holmes Post 84, White River Junction, Vt.**  
Chartered June 20 (20 members)

**Post 421, Topeka, Kan.** Chartered June 20 (15 members)

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[REMEMBRANCE]

# 'I think it is a debt we owe them'

*Monument will honor fallen Jewish chaplains.*

BY CRAIG ROBERTS

A monument to the 13 Jewish chaplains who have died in military service will at last be added at Arlington National Cemetery.

On May 23, the House of Representatives approved the monument with a unanimous vote of 380-0. The Senate followed suit three days later. A dedication ceremony is scheduled for Oct. 24.

The monument's story begins in the North Atlantic on Feb. 3, 1943, when a U-boat torpedoed the U.S. Army troop-transport ship *Dorchester*. Among the 904 men aboard were four Army chaplains: Lt. George L. Fox, a Methodist minister; Lt. John P. Washington, a Roman Catholic priest; Lt. Clark V. Poling, a Dutch Reformed minister; and Lt. Alexander D. Goode, a Jewish rabbi.

Of the 230 who survived *Dorchester's* sinking, many owed their lives to the four chaplains, who offered prayer and encouragement to the fleeing crew and passengers. They also handed out life jackets, including their own.

Their story made a deep impression on Sons of The American Legion member Ken Kraetzer of New York, who visited Chaplains Hill at Arlington and found the names of only three of the revered Four Chaplains: Washington on the Catholic chaplains' stone, and Fox and Poling on a monument to Protestant chaplains. Goode's name, however, was conspicuously absent. In fact, there was no monument to Jewish chaplains at all.

"When I realized that Jewish chaplains were not honored at Arlington, I called the Jewish War Veterans," Kraetzer says. "They were not aware of this. They, in turn, suggested I call Adm. Harold Robinson, and we have been on a mission ever since."

Robinson is a retired rear admiral and Navy chaplain who served for 36 years. He currently directs the Jewish Welfare Board's Jewish Chaplains Council.

*The American Legion Magazine* spoke with Robinson about the privately funded monument.

## What is the project's status?

We are just a couple of bureaucratic niceties away from casting the bronze plaque and contracting to have the monument erected. We're planning a dedication ceremony for the fall, an educational tour with the bronze plaque, and a brochure about the role of chaplains in the U.S. military.

## What's your role in this campaign?

It actually goes back about three years, when Ken called me and said he'd been to Arlington and discovered the

incongruity. He said, "What are we going to do about it?" I said, "We're going to get together and fix it."

We have been raising funds and designing the memorial, and presenting the project to sponsors in the House and Senate and to the U.S. Fine Arts Commission. We have had a lot of help from a guy named Sol Moglen, who established a memorial for 9/11 first responders.

## Who designed the monument?

A woman named Deborah Jackson, who also works with the 9/11 First Responders Memorial, the wall of remembrance, in Brooklyn. She is a New York-area artist and has done a great job. Her design, as much as possible, replicates the design that exists on the other memorials there in Arlington.

Our chaplain service supported troops whether they were Protestant, Catholic or Jewish. Every chaplain felt the responsibility for every soldier, sailor, airman, Marine, or Coast Guardsman. So we wanted the monuments to be symmetrical, representing the symmetry that exists in the Chaplain Corps.

## Obviously, you have an emotional investment in this project.

One of the things we know is that you don't leave somebody behind. When a unit comes home, you bring everybody home. Not everybody comes home the same way, but you bring everybody home. And there is a real sense for any of us who have ever served that if we couldn't bring these folks home in body, at least we bring home their names. It's time for Jewish chaplains to be memorialized, along with their compatriots. So we are doing that. I think it is a debt we owe them.

The response we have gotten from the families has been very powerful. One fellow was, I guess, 5 or 6 when his dad went off to Vietnam and never came home. He was overwhelmed when the House passed the monument bill, because not only is his dad's service being acknowledged, but also his family's service.

As Adm. Mullen points out, and Michelle Obama and Jill Biden are pointing out, too, it's not just the servicemember who serves, it's the whole family. That service continues in a palpably powerful way if there's the loss of a servicemember, because that family is forever without that father or that brother or that son.

*Craig Roberts is media relations manager for The American Legion.*



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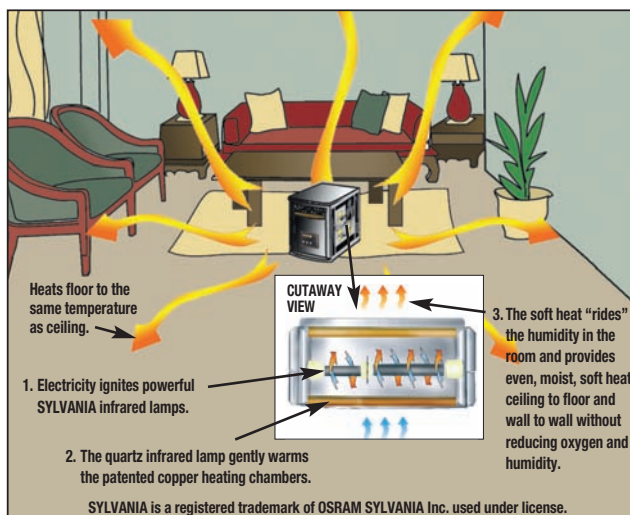
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## [EDUCATION]

**MGIB delimiting date rarely extended**

**Q:** *I am in school, and have been for a year now. I'm wondering if I could get my GI Bill extended if I am actively enrolled. I currently receive the Montgomery GI Bill, Chapter 30. I have asked, and get conflicting responses.*

**A:** Unfortunately, VA usually will only extend a GI Bill delimiting date in three specific situations:



- If you were recalled to active duty, in which case your delimiting date would be reset to your latest separation date.
- If you were detained by a foreign power.

■ If you were somehow prevented from attending school because of a temporary disability – you were in a car accident, had an unexpected job relocation, or were the care provider for a critically ill family member.

In the last two cases, supporting documentation is required, and the last case is extremely difficult to prove.

The Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) has a 10-year delimitation date (10 years from your date of discharge), and by law VA can't continue paying you past that date, which is different from just running out of entitlement. In the case of running out, VA can pay you until the end of the semester or for up to 12 weeks, whichever is shorter.

Another option would be to switch to the new Post-9/11 GI Bill, if you are eligible for it, as it has a 15-year delimitation date. If you are not eligible for the new GI Bill or don't fall into one of the above categories, then you are most likely out of options.

*Valerie Vigil, a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Arizona, is a past vice president of the National Association of Veterans' Program Administrators. Send GI Bill questions to her by email. [askvalerie@legion.org](mailto:askvalerie@legion.org)*



## [PERSONAL FINANCE]

**Avoid a holiday budget blowout**

We realize that triple-digit temperatures are still the norm in many parts of the country (or at least in ours), and that the holiday on most folks' radar is Labor Day. We're ready for a three-day weekend, too. But as a couple of financial planners who usually spend the Christmas season encouraging people to get through it without racking up a pile of debt, we thought we'd turn your attention to the end of the year while you still have time on your side. These five steps may keep your budget from overheating as the holidays approach.

■ **Have a plan.** A shopping list and a firm budget are central to a financially rewarding holiday season, so make yours now – and stick to it. This will help you avoid one of the landmines of holiday shopping: impulse buys.

■ **Set some aside now.** We've seen varying numbers, but it appears that the average family spends about \$1,000 on gifts. With at least seven paydays left before mid-December, pack your lunch, penny-pinch, hit the ATM and stuff \$100 in an envelope each paycheck, and – voila! – you're 70 percent of the way there. Adjust your savings based on the results of the plan you developed. It's like a late start on the

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old Christmas accounts, but not too late. And next year, you can start earlier.

■ **Spread it out.** You've made a list of who is getting what, so why not start to chip away at it now? Clean out the back of the closet and start stacking those gifts in the

back. You'll avoid the holiday rush and a big gash to your wallet. And as a side benefit, you may find gifts you stashed in years before but forgot about.

■ **Plant the seeds.** Do all of your nieces and nephews, in-laws and out-laws, friends and neighbors need gifts? Probably not. Start talking now about limiting gifts. Consider drawing names, or swapping services as an alternative to pricey gifts. Get everyone on the same sheet of music early, and you'll avoid hurt feelings and financial stress.

■ **Be a cash buyer.** While credit cards are convenient, they make it so easy to stray from your list, break your budget and splurge. This year, make a commitment to greenbacks.

Follow this approach, and your 2012 resolutions won't include shedding your holiday debt.

*June Walbert and J.J. Montanaro are certified financial planners for USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. Submit questions for them online. [www.legion.org/financialfootlocker](http://www.legion.org/financialfootlocker)*

## [HOMELAND SECURITY]

**Airport security breaches, by the numbers**

U.S. airports have weathered 25,000 security breaches since November 2001, according to a House subcommittee. These include:

**14,322 instances of travelers entering secure entries and passages**

**6,000 instances of TSA failure to screen a passenger or a passenger's carry-on property**

**2,616 instances involving an individual getting past a checkpoint without submitting to full screening**

A Transportation Security Agency spokesman responded to the report by calling the figures a "tiny fraction of 1 percent of the more than 5.5 billion travelers at the more than 450 airports" where TSA operates.

[CAREERS]

## Best résumé strategies for transitioning troops



**Include a live email link.**

Make it easy for people to contact you with just one click.

**Include a live link to your**

**LinkedIn profile.** In today's job market, if you're not on LinkedIn, you don't exist. Add Twitter and Facebook to your job search, as appropriate.

**Let your objective drive the process.** Effective résumé-writing focuses on who you want to be in your next position, and not just what you did in the past.

**Use the right keywords to support your current objectives.** Showcase your transferable skills throughout your résumé: in the summary, branding statement, job descriptions, achievements and more.

**Speak the language of your target audience.** If you're looking for opportunities in corporate America, eliminate military lingo that means nothing to civilians. Conversely, if focused on defense or government, those same words and acronyms carry important messages.

**Start with a career summary or profile.** When you start with a summary, you're telling a prospective employer what you can do for them. When you start with an objective, you're writing what you want from them. Obviously, the former is more powerful.

**Sell your experience.** Don't write dry responsibility statements that tell what you did. Instead, write achievement-focused content that sells how well you did it.

**Make it easy to read.** Keep your paragraphs and bullets at four to six lines. White space does matter, so add blank lines to let your résumé breathe. No one will read it if it's a chore.

Wendy Enelow is co-author of "Expert Résumés for Military-to-Civilian Transitions" and "Executive Résumé Toolkit." [www.wendyenelow.com](http://www.wendyenelow.com)

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### [LEGIONNAIRES IN ACTION]

## New York post aids Missouri comrades

When a tornado ripped through Joplin, Mo., in June, the Legionnaires of Mahopac, N.Y., Post 1080 saw an opportunity to prove their "devotion to mutual helpfulness."

In the storm's wake, Joplin's Post 13 family, including Commander Howard Spiva, was eager to help local veterans and military families. Meanwhile, Post 1080's adjutant, Ted Martine, contacted the Department of Missouri to get Post 13's contact information. After a call to Spiva, Mahopac's Legion family collected enough donations to fill a 24-foot truck.

On June 24, four men – Jerry Purdy, Wes Mackey, Bob Cauley and Post 1080 Commander Joseph Toleno – started for Joplin with their precious cargo.

"It was more than I ever dreamed it would be," Spiva said. The New Yorkers had brought clothing, blankets, sheets, toiletries, even cash.

Asked why they drove more than 1,000 miles to help Post 13 care for its own, Toleno said, "It's who we are. It's what we do. It's our sworn duty to come to the aid of Legionnaires and veterans in need. It's that simple."

**Support Post 13's relief efforts in Joplin:**

**Howard Spiva, (417) 483-3099**



Photo courtesy Post 1080

## How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to **The American Legion Magazine**, Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206, fax (317) 630-1280, e-mail [reunions@legion.org](mailto:reunions@legion.org) or submit information via our Web site, [www.legion.org/veterans/reunions](http://www.legion.org/veterans/reunions).

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are publicized free of charge.

Your notice will appear on our Web site within a week and will remain available online until the final day of your reunion. Upon submission, please allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, The American Legion Magazine**

will publish a group's listing only once a year. Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

## Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to **The American Legion Magazine**, Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail [reunions@legion.org](mailto:reunions@legion.org).

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life mem-

berships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.** Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to **The American Legion Magazine**, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to **The American Legion Magazine**, Attn: **Comrades in Distress**, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

## AIR FORCE / ARMY AIR FORCES

**47th Air Police Sqdn (England, 1952-1955)**, Mechanicsville, VA, 10/11-13, Ray Davis, (804) 746-0342, [racyd@verizon.net](mailto:racyd@verizon.net); **93rd Bomb Grp**, Tucson, AZ, 10/20-24, Joe Duran, (805) 525-4681, [dogpatchraider@gmail.com](mailto:dogpatchraider@gmail.com); **362nd Ftr Grp**, Nashville, TN, 10/5-8, Fern Mann, (901) 388-4477, [cmann1525@aol.com](mailto:cmann1525@aol.com); **405th Bomb Sqdn L (Laon, France, 1953-1959)**, Las Vegas, 9/20-24, Willie Wise, (717) 838-1561, [twocrickets70@aol.com](mailto:twocrickets70@aol.com); **603rd AC&W (Germany, 1960-1969)**, Nashville, TN, 9/25-28, William Chick, [littlechick@msn.com](mailto:littlechick@msn.com); **F-4 Phantom II Society**, Tucson, AZ, 10/10-14, Bill Crean, (856) 461-6637, [williamcrean@comcast.net](mailto:williamcrean@comcast.net); **Thunderbirds Alumni Assn**, Las Vegas, 11/17-19, Doris Wilson, (702) 871-7197, [doewilson@aol.com](mailto:doewilson@aol.com); **Webb AFB**

(**All Student Pilots & Permanent Party**), Big Spring, TX, 10/7-9, Joe Hays, (432) 264-1999, [hangar25@crcom.net](mailto:hangar25@crcom.net)

## ARMY

**6th Inf Div (All Units)**, Dayton, OH, 9/7-11, Russ McLogan, (517) 437-2768, [terruspress@dmci.net](mailto:terruspress@dmci.net); **42nd Inf Plt Scout Dog 101st Abn Div**, Branson, MO, 10/7-9, Jackie McIntyre, (612) 522-9377, [42ndmom@comcast.net](mailto:42ndmom@comcast.net); **54th Co Eng Bn (Border Barons, 1985-1994)**, Harrisburg, PA, 10/29, Chris Noble, (717) 273-1388, [chrisandra@comcast.net](mailto:chrisandra@comcast.net); **164th Inf Assn**, Valley City, ND, 9/16-18, Patricia Drong, (701) 646-6561; **192nd AHC (Vietnam)**, Albany, NY, 9/22-25, Walt Rokenstire, (518) 608-4780, [wrockenstire@nycap.rr.com](mailto:wrockenstire@nycap.rr.com); **209th Supply Co**

(**Army Reserves**), Lafayette, IN, 10/8-9, Charles Critser, (765) 296-4323, [crits72@aol.com](mailto:crits72@aol.com); **510th Ord Co (Sandia Base, NM, & Urlau, Germany, 1961-1965)**, Albuquerque, NM, 10/13-16, Vernon Brewer, (704) 786-1993, [510threunion@gmail.com](mailto:510threunion@gmail.com); **525th Mil Det (Ha Tien, 1968-1971)**, San Diego, 11/11-13, Sherm Flanders, (703) 684-6984, [sflanders@comcast.net](mailto:sflanders@comcast.net); **HQ Co 54th Eng Bn**, Helen, GA, 10/9-12, Calvin Walker, (904) 772-9280, [wildflecken54@aol.com](mailto:wildflecken54@aol.com)

## COAST GUARD

**North Coast NY Assn**, Sackets Harbor, NY, 9/16-18, Gordon Koscher, (330) 274-2927

## MARINES

**2nd Bn 1st Mar (Vietnam)**, Memphis, TN, 11/9-13, Paul Mangan, (515) 360-2600, [namgrunt@aol.com](mailto:namgrunt@aol.com); **2nd Bn 26th Mar**, Quantico, VA, 9/23-26, Harvey Lang, (575) 542-8085; **Combined Action Program Assn (Vietnam)**, Oahu, HI, 11/4-11, Fred Caleffie, (254) 547-0879, [fcaleffie@hotmail.com](mailto:fcaleffie@hotmail.com); **Mar Barracks (Sasebo, Japan)**, Las Vegas, 10/21-23, C.R. McCarthy, (515) 274-9110, [coach430@aol.com](mailto:coach430@aol.com); **Plt 87 (MCRD Parris Island, 1949)**, Springfield, IL, 3/15-18, Rene Wattleit, (217) 827-3532, [frenchflyer@msn.com](mailto:frenchflyer@msn.com); **Texas Chpt 3rd Mar Div**, San Antonio, 10/13-16, Mike Sohn, (210) 654-3310, [jumient2@hotmail.com](mailto:jumient2@hotmail.com)

## NAVY

**Blue DD 744 Korean Vets Blue Assn**, Branson, MO, 9/27-30, Don Collins, (303) 986-8425, [fdcollins@comcast.net](mailto:fdcollins@comcast.net); **Caperton DD 650**, Virginia Beach, VA, 10/16-19, Bill McEvoy, (732) 477-5804; **Collett DD 730**, Sulphur, LA, 10/5-9, Wilmer Abshire, (337) 433-6160, [kathy.nathan@communicom.com](mailto:kathy.nathan@communicom.com); **Columbia CL 56**, Washington, 10/5-8, Bill Bohne, (610) 543-9073, [usnc156@cs.com](mailto:usnc156@cs.com); **Diodon SS 349**, Branson, MO, 11/10-12, Jay Everitt, (918) 786-8851, [jayss349@hotmail.com](mailto:jayss349@hotmail.com); **Franklin D. Roosevelt CV/CVB/CVA Sqdn & Shipmates**, San Diego, 10/25-30, Al Wedemeyer, (404) 497-0943, [squadronsmates@aol.com](mailto:squadronsmates@aol.com); **Hanson DD/DDR 832**, Mobile, AL, 10/13-16, Roger Austin, (770) 504-0004, [roger&maryellenaustin@comcast.net](mailto:roger&maryellenaustin@comcast.net); **James O'Hara APA 90**, Orlando, FL, 10/2-5, Walter Schwarting, (262) 367-0055, [saltylvio@aol.com](mailto:saltylvio@aol.com); **Leary DD 879**, Louisville, KY, 9/21-25, Dick Englander, (941) 341-0770, [crelibra@verizon.net](mailto:crelibra@verizon.net); **Lloyd Thomas DDE/DD 764**, Pittsburgh, 10/9-12, Bob Scherrer, (757) 467-6270, [scherrerva@aol.com](mailto:scherrerva@aol.com); **LST 349**, Weststead, NY, 9/28, John Enzmann, (516) 745-6910; **Murray DD/DDE 576**, Charleston, SC, 9/14-18, Neil DenBleyker, (315) 673-2181, [ndenblke@aol.com](mailto:ndenblke@aol.com); **NMCC 14**, Orange Park, FL, 11/3-6, George Manning, (850) 352-4020, [yeoman61@wfeca.net](mailto:yeoman61@wfeca.net); **Towers DDG 9**, Atlanta, 9/12-17, Raymond Wong, (415) 566-7285, [usstowersddg9@pacbell.net](mailto:usstowersddg9@pacbell.net); **Tutuila ARG 4**, Norfolk, VA, 9/14-17,



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Larry MacIntire, (727) 244-2664, swifrivrat@hotmail.com; **VFP-62 / VC-62**, Jacksonville, FL, 9/15-18, Ken Jack, (814) 435-3568, ken.dar.jack@gmail.com; **Wilkes-Barre CL 103**, Chesapeake, VA, 10/7-9, Bob DiDonno, (860) 690-9215, bdi-donno@aol.com; **Yorktown CV 10**, Charleston, SC, 10/13-15, Todd Cummins, (843) 849-1928, yorktowncv10association@gmail.com

### LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Post 47, MA: Stephen R. Bradford

### IN SEARCH OF

**1st of 10th Cav 4th Inf Div LZ Action Hwy 19 (Ankhe Pleiku, 1969-1971)**, Danny Gonzales, (618) 650-0227  
**3rd Armd Div 1st Cav (Kirchgoens, Germany, 1961-1964)**, Rick Summers, rick.l.summers@gmail.com  
**4th Mar Air Wing (Peleliu, 1944-1946)**, Frank Hallinger, (979) 543-4433, roach@wirehand.net  
**13th Eng C Bn (All Eras)**, Billy Quinton, (727) 323-1144, bquinton@tampabay.rr.com  
**15th Aeromedical Sqdn L 1735 Airtrans Grp (Brookley AFB, Mobile, AL, 1955-1956)**, Robert Willaver, (717) 201-8275  
**49th Ftr Sqdn Assn (1941-2011)**, Bob Thomalen, (845) 225-2445, the3garribebs@verizon.net  
**406 Co Boot Camp (San Diego, 1948)**, Ted Rhyne, (828) 324-8412  
**416th OMS (Griffiss AFB, Rome, NY, 1966-1970)**, Jim Vulcan, vulcan@verizon.net  
**537th FA Bn Charlie Btry (Camp Carson, CO, 1953-1954)**, Jim Belk, (563) 285-9224, rjbelk@netins.net  
**4509 Co (Bainbridge, MD, 1946)**, Stanford Ladner, (228) 864-7932  
**6214th Sec Police Sqdn (Tainan, Taiwan, ROC)**, Alan Auld, (407) 342-4908, acauld111@netzero.net

**Armed Forces Permanent League Championship Basketball (1958)**, Stu Fitelson, (206) 223-1110, fitelson@clear.net  
**CBMU 614 Seabees (Saipan, Mariana Islands, 1944-1946)**, Bill Pokludo, (817) 626-0726  
**Cbt Support Co 87th Inf 2nd Inf Div (Fort Benning, GA, 1961-1963)**, Robert Coreman, (574) 536-0160, rd815@frontier.com  
**D Co 9th Engr Bn C V Corps (Aschaffenburg, Germany, 1959-1962)**, Eliseo Ruiz, (602) 971-6764  
**HQ Co 29th Sig Bn Const (Germany, 1956-1960)**, Michael Tart, (505) 287-3119  
**Kidd DD 661 (Korea, 1955-1956)**, Ralph Martinez, (505) 831-1592  
**L4 12 3rd Mar Div (Da Nang, Vietnam, 1965)**, Bill Tice, (951) 279-5257, sbtice@earthlink.net  
**MACV-SOG Comm Ctr MACV 1 & 2 (1964-1969)**, Henry Sanders, (864) 400-8819, sandysan28@bellsouth.net  
**Palau CVE 122 (1945-1954)**, Harry Weldy, (410) 658-6043, hweldy@zoominternet.net  
**Sub Repair Units 134-3002 (Brisbane, Australia & Subic Bay, Luzon, Philippines, 1944-1945)**, Ray Zimmerman, (620) 437-2252  
**Trp C 1st Sqdn 4th Cav 1st Inf Div (Li Khe-Aw Khe, Vietnam, 1969-1970)**, Rich Garling, (706) 754-2286, mpalme6@excite.com  
**USAF 55th & 58th Weather Recon Sqdns**, Conrad Layton, (914) 466-6945, conradlay@aol.com

### TAPS

**James H. Ashcraft, Dept. of West Virginia.** Dept. Cmdr. 1970-1971, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 1971-1974, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 1975-1979, Nat'l American Legion Magazine Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1975-1979, Nat'l Mbrshp. & Post Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1981-1982 and Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1983-1987.

**Walter Bolling, Dept. of Alaska.** Nat'l Law & Order Cmte. Memb. 1958-1960, Dept. Cmdr. 1964-1965, Nat'l Econ. Cmsn. Memb. 1967-1970 and Nat'l Legis. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1976-1978.  
**Carol A. Hamburger, Dept. of Arizona.** Dept. Cmdr. 2009-2010, Nat'l Counter-Subversive Activities Cmte. Memb. 2006-2007, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Chmn. 2007-2008, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2008-2011 and Nat'l Legis. Cncl. Memb. 2011.  
**Arthur R. Kennedy, Dept. of Mexico.** Dept. Cmdr. (Panama Canal), 1969-1970.  
**Leon F. Miller, Dept. of Missouri.** Nat'l Education Cmte. Memb. 1957-1959, Nat'l & Homeland Sec. Cncl. Memb. 1964-1965 and Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1980-2000.  
**Peter Pappas, Dept. of Massachusetts.** Nat'l Aerospace Cmte. Memb. 1955-1965, Nat'l Mbrshp. & Post Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1954-1956 and 1957-1958, Nat'l & Homeland Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1965-1966 and 1968-1973, Nat'l Military Affairs Cmte. Memb. 1979-1982, Nat'l Legis. Cncl. Memb. 1983-1984, Nat'l Resolutions Assignment Cmte. Memb. 1982-2006 and Nat'l Resolutions Assignment Cmte. Vice Chmn. 2006-2011.  
**Alfred Piroli, Dept. of Pennsylvania.** Dept. Cmdr. 1988-1989, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1972-1973 and 1974-1985, Nat'l Homeland Sec. & Civil Preparedness Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1989-1993, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 1992-2002, Nat'l Conv. Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 2006-2008, Nat'l Homeland Sec. & Civil Preparedness Cmte. Memb. 1987-1989, Nat'l Legis. Cncl. Memb. 1976-1994, 1999-2000 and 2001-2006, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 2002-2008, Nat'l Internal Affairs Cmsn. Memb. 2008-2009, Nat'l American Legion Magazine Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 2002-2006 and Nat'l Conv. Cmsn. Memb. 2009-2011.

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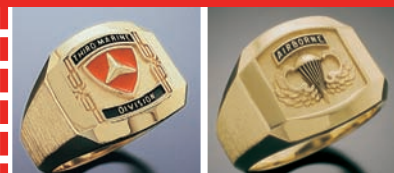
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**A YOUNG MAN** went to audition for a TV talent show.

"What do you do?" the show's producer asked him.

"I imitate birds," the young man replied.

"Bird imitators are a dime a dozen. We can't use you. Get out of here!"

"OK," the disappointed young man said. He then flapped his arms and flew out the window.

**WHAT DO YOU DO** if you see a spaceman? Park your car in it, man.

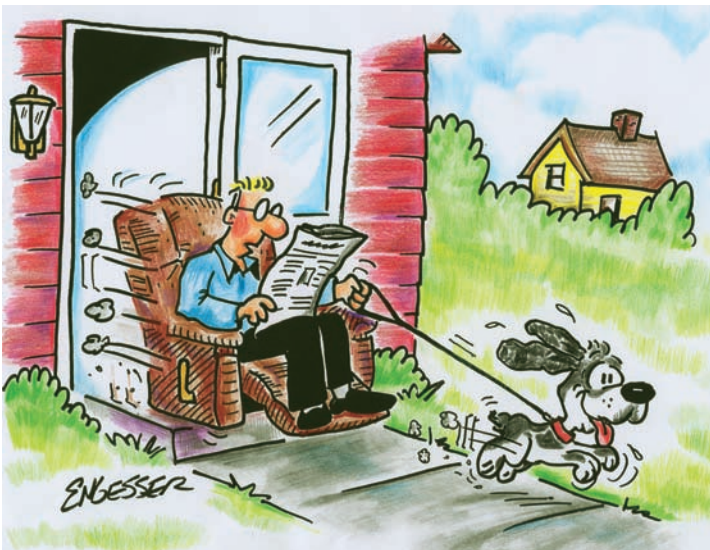
**AN OLD WOMAN** decided to have her portrait painted. She told the artist, "I want you to paint me with a diamond necklace and earrings, emerald bracelets and a ruby pendant."

"But you're not wearing any of those things," the artist replied.

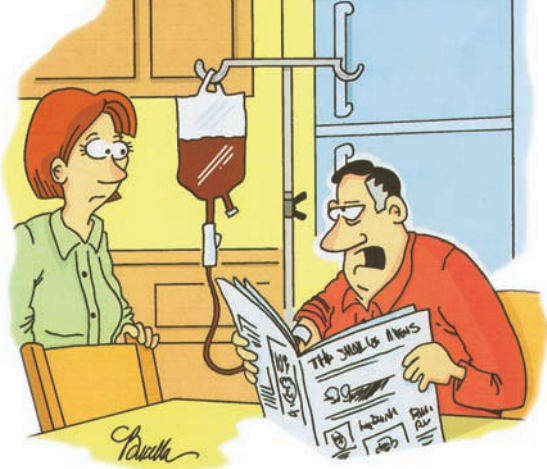
"I know," she said. "It's in case I die before my husband. I just know he'll marry one of his little girlfriends right away, and I want her to go crazy looking for the jewelry."

**I AM GRATEFUL** that I am not as judgmental as all of the self-righteous, mean-spirited people around me.

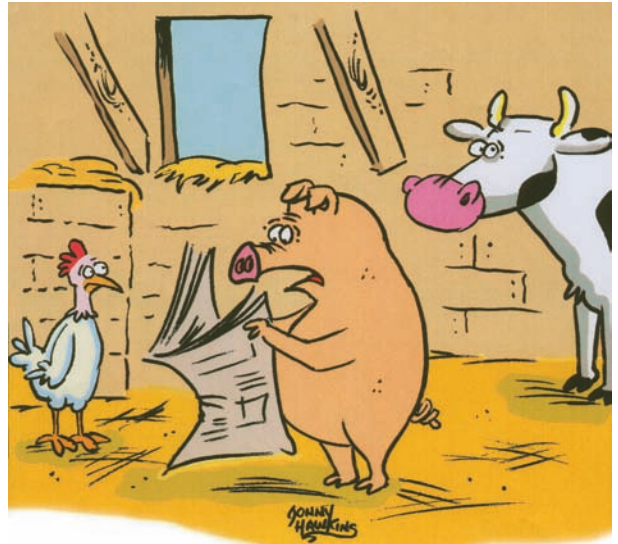
**THE LOW SELF-ESTEEM SUPPORT GROUP** will meet Thursday evenings. Please use the back door.



"Time for our walk?"



"The doctor said I shouldn't drink so much coffee. Does it look like I'm drinking?"



"My horoscope is really weird today. What does 'BLT' stand for?"

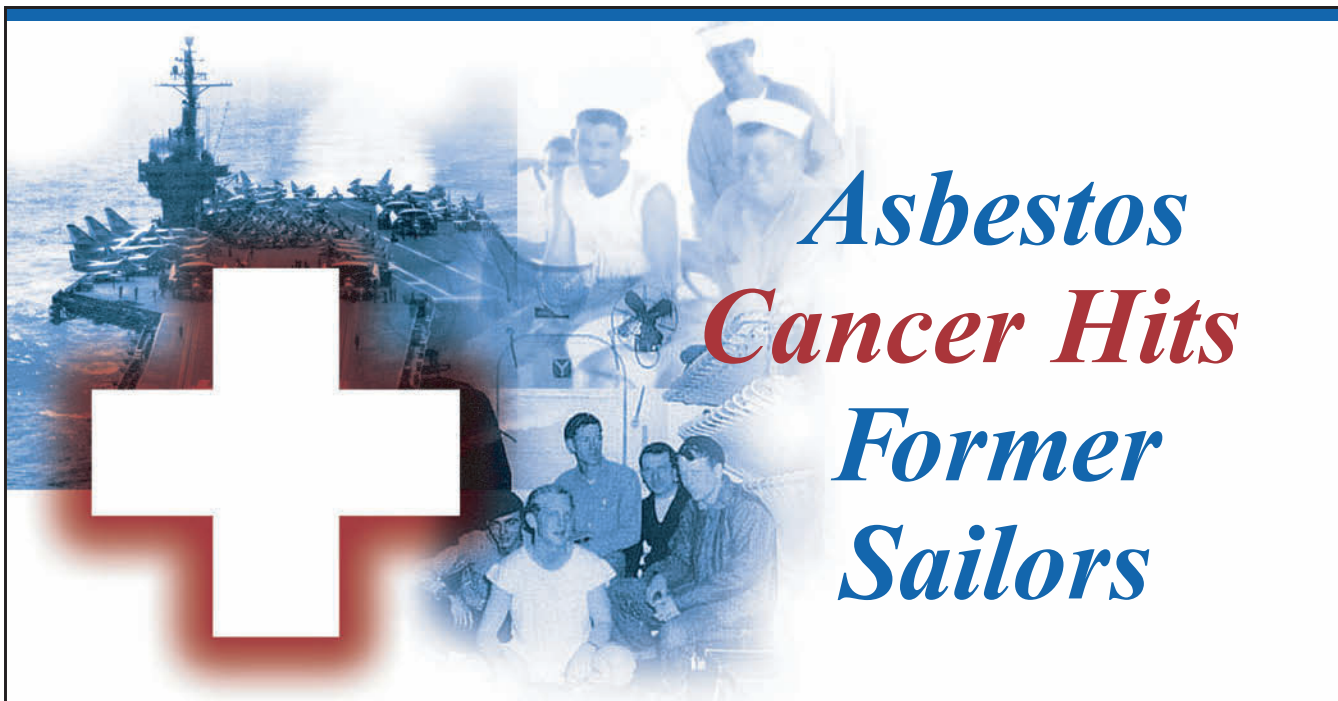
**A YOUNG PASTOR** was known for his amazing command of the English language – a talent that more often than not got in the way of making his points clear.

One Sunday, he exhorted, "Oh, Lord, waken Thy cause in the hearts of this congregation, and give them new eyes to see and new impulse to do. Send down Thy lev-er or lee-ver – according to Webster's or Worcester's dictionary, whichever Thou usest – and pry them into activity!"

**IT WON'T WORK OUT.** I'm a Libra. You're a jerk.

**TWO FISH** are in a tank. One turns to the other and says, "How do you drive this thing?"

**"ACCORDING TO NEW POLLS,** 66 percent of Americans believe the country is headed in the wrong direction. But the good news is, gas is so expensive and traffic is so bad that we won't get there for a long time." – Jay Leno



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